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**SELECT BIOGRAPHY.**

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A COLLECTION OF  
**LIVES OF EMINENT MEN,**  
WHO HAVE BEEN AN  
**HONOR TO THEIR COUNTRY.**

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BY **4089a.202**  
**VARIOUS DISTINGUISHED WRITERS.**

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DEDICATED TO HIS MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY,  
**GEORGE IV.**

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NO PART OF HISTORY IS MORE INSTRUCTIVE AND DELIGHTFUL  
THAN THE LIVES OF GREAT & WORTHY MEN.

**BURRITT.**



**ILLUSTRATED WITH PORTRAITS.**

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Vol. 9.

**Select Biography.**

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THE

**L I F E**

OF

**BENJAMIN WEST.**

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Dorset Street, Fleet Street, London.



# THE LIFE

OF

## BENJAMIN WEST.

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**BENJAMIN WEST** was born near Springfield, Chester County, in the state of Pennsylvania, on the 10th of October, 1738.

The revered founder of this state was accompanied to America by Thomas Pearson, grandfather of the artist. The inviolable friendship which subsisted between these two disinterested characters is still a theme of admiration to the inhabitants of the New World; and the soil on which active benevolence first planted its footsteps in the arrival of William Penn and his faithful companion, is recognised with veneration and love. Emigrated from their native shores in a laudable enterprise of usefulness and felicity for their fellow-creatures, it is natural to suppose that they were not insensible to the social endearments of relationship and of home. While zeal and hope, in sacred union, anticipated with ardent and lively emotions scenes of fu-

ture prosperity and happiness in the growing interests of a new colony, modelled in conformity to the purposes of upright and universal benevolence, directing its energies to the arts of peace, memory cherished the recollections of former years, and the heart retained its susceptibility of social impression.

That part of the country, therefore, in which these excellent and worthy men first landed, was named Chester by Mr. Pearson, in remembrance of his native city. Discovering, in the first field which was cultivated, a considerable spring of water adjacent to the spot on which he built his house, Mr. Pearson called his plantation Springfield.

John West, the father of Benjamin, having completed his education at the quaker's school at Uxbridge, proceeded to his relations. Shortly after his arrival he married Sarah Pearson. The transcendent traits of his character are exemplified in an occurrence, which, as it is intimately connected with the cause of humanity, of late years triumphant over injustice and oppression, cannot fail to interest the attention.

His marriage-portion with Sarah Pearson, included a negro slave, whose conduct obtained so great a share of Mr. West's approbation, that during his absence on a voyage to the West Indies, he charged him with the superintendence of his plantation. Such, indeed,

were the fidelity and obedience of the one, and such the uprightness and benevolence of the other, that the actual evils of slavery were unknown. Authority, tempered with benignity, appeared in the deportment of the master, and excited both reverence and esteem. Obedience was pleasure—though the name of slave existed.

Having occasion to remain a short time at Barbadoes, he witnessed with grief and horror the cruelties which were practised on the slaves of the West Indies. On a mind like his, influenced by the charities of philanthropy, the scene of degradation and wretchedness there exhibited, would naturally fix an indelible impression. The very barbarity of avarice, glutting itself with the blood of the defenceless slaves, and the pride of wealth raising its mansions of splendour and luxury on the ashes of its sable victims, affected the heart of humanity with sympathetic woe.

Reflection led to inquiry and exertion. Slavery appeared odious and vile in the unjust debasement of the enslaved, and disgraceful to such as countenanced it: and in an interview with Dr. Gammon, at that time head of the community of friends in Barbadoes, Mr. West was confirmed in his opinion, that it was not only contrary to nature, but to every principle of revealed religion. Whatever its modification, or temperament arising from the lenity of



a humane proprietor, the system appeared evidently incompatible with reason, and hostile to those social, moral, and religious interests which mankind in general are entitled to share, and of which none can be deprived without violence to nature, or contempt of nature's God.

Resolved, therefore, not to countenance a system in which there existed so appalling a possibility, though in his own immediate sphere a happy exemption was realized, he formed his purpose to obliterate even the name of slave from his abode. Immediately on his return, he evinced the reality of his commiseration, then matured into divine sentiment, by giving freedom to his negro. But the same spirit that cheered the domestic scene, displayed its energy and zeal in the cause of diffusive philanthropy; and the example was soon followed.

Several meetings were convened by the friends, and such were the arguments adduced, that slavery was considered as criminally inconsistent with Christianity. At length the subject was discussed in the general assembly at Philadelphia. The result was, that no member of the community of quakers, should retain a slave on pain of expulsion. Nor did they thus only discountenance the evil at the sacrifice of considerable pecuniary interests; institutions were formed for the intellectual and moral im-

provement of the emancipated slaves. Thus humanity, in unison with Christianity, triumphed in an achievement more glorious than the conquest of kingdoms.

Influenced by piety and benevolence, the neighbourhood of Springfield became devoted to useful exertion. The father of Mrs. West erected a meeting-house for religious worship, and in the year 1738, a circumstance transpired of rather singular interest, which as connected with the birth of our artist it may not be deemed improper to introduce.

Edmund Peckover, a preacher justly celebrated for his exemplary religion and zeal, visited Springfield; and in a discourse commanding the full assemblage of all the constituent powers of instructive, energetic, and impressive eloquence, represented, as if divinely inspired, the eventful realities of future history; congratulating the virtuous and peaceful inhabitants of the New World, and bewailing the crimes and impending woes of surrounding nations. Leading his auditors in grateful retrospect of the rising interests of America, he directed their progress to subsequent eminence and glory: contrasting the infant state, in prospect of honourable success and felicity, with those whose power, wealth, and influence had been the envy and the dread of the world, but which were enervated by vice into the decrepitude and imbecility of aged degene-

raey and incorrigible infatuation. The atheism and licentiousness of the French, he exhibited as abhorrent and fatal. The English, he represented as worshipping the golden image of interest, absorbed in avarice, and abandoned in luxury. "But," said he, "the day and the hour are hastening on, when the image shall be shaken from its pedestal by the tempest of Jehovah's descending vengeance, its altars overturned, and the worshippers terribly convinced that without the favour of Almighty God, there is no wisdom in man. But, from the woes and the crimes of Europe, let us turn aside our eyes; let us turn from the worshippers of commerce, clinging round their idols of gold and silver, and amidst the wrath, the storm, and the thunder, endeavouring to hold them up; let us not look at the land of blasphemies; for in the crashing of engines, the gushing of blood, and the shrieking of witnesses more to be pitied than the victims, the activity of God's purifying displeasure will be heard; while turning our eyes towards the mountains of this new world, the forests shall be seen fading away, cities rising along the shores, and the terrified nations of Europe flying out of the smoke and the burning to find refuge here." Every individual was solemnly impressed: and so powerfully affected was the mind of Mrs. West, that a premature birth, which it was feared would



be attended with the loss of both the mother and the infant, was the consequence.

On this occasion, Mr. West suggested to Peckover his conviction that the event intimated unusual anticipations relative to his child. The zealous and active mind of the orator, instantly caught the idea, and glowing with the fervours of pious friendship, recommended the most conscientious care in the education of the boy, and the most judicious attention to the developements of character. The advice seemed to possess the sanctity and authority of a divine charge. In what manner it was observed, and with what solicitude and affection it was fulfilled, will appear in the future conduct pursued:

In the first six years of Benjamin's life, nothing material occurred to indicate particular genius. But in his seventh year, he was justly regarded as possessing the properties of an extraordinary mind, which then began to develop its native superiority. An incident, simple indeed in itself, exhibited a pleasing intimation of that pre-eminence, which the artist attained in future years.

One of his sisters, who was on a visit at her father's house, left her infant in the care of Benjamin, while in company with her mother she gathered a few flowers in the garden. Intrusted thus with an interesting charge, juvenile fidelity watched every feature of the en-

daring little stranger then asleep in the cradle. Infant innocence, thus in lovely repose, happening to smile, attracted the yet more ardent attention of Benjamin, and seemed to inspire him with admiration and delight. Immediately seizing a pen, and some paper which lay on the table, he attempted a portrait.

On the return of his mother and sister, he appeared somewhat confused, and was endeavouring to conceal the paper: but being interrogated as to the cause of his apparent agitation, he submitted the delineation of his amiable little charge. Mrs. West instantly exclaimed; "I declare he has made a likeness of little Sally!"

This incident, simple as it may appear, is by no means void of interest as a fact, indicating not only the reality, but the force of genius emerging into exercise by an intuitive consciousness, unaided either by example or by instruction. For it is worthy of remark that he had never even seen a picture of any description, yet in the delineation, thus hastily produced, his mother instantly recognised the infant in smiling repose.

Encouraged by the approbation which was testified on this occasion, he expressed his desire to represent the flowers which his mother and sister had just gathered.

The inspiration of genius had now enlivened and warmed his imagination;—and even in the

juvenile artist, the energies of mind felt a commanding ability to pourtray the objects of vision. How far this is correct, will appear in the subsequent incidents of his early years. Mrs. West shewed the portrait to her husband, who viewed it with evident emotions of surprise and pleasure: and impressed with the interesting and admonitory observations of Peckover, anticipated the displays of extraordinary talent in his son.

But the circumstances attending the early developement of his genius, thus recognised, are worthy of remark, as they were by no means propitious to its progress. From the religious tenets maintained by the society of friends, which discountenance every conformity to the customs, fashions, and amusements of the world; and which, as enforced by the institutions of William Penn, were most conscientiously preserved;—and from the simplicity and retirement of the new colony, (forming a direct contrast to the studied refinements which characterized the polished nations of Europe,) no very sanguine inference could be drawn in favour of an art, whose chief end in the general estimation is, ornamental elegance. Not aware of its instructive influence, the interesting and advantageous purposes to which it may be applied, the opinions of men in such a state were most likely to be unpropitious to the art. But, by a pro-



cess of incidents for which it is impossible to account on any other principle than that of a superintending intelligence over genius destined to an elevated sphere, whatever seemed unfavourable to the improvement of the artist, was either obviated without violence of consistency, or rendered subservient to the very purposes which its natural tendency appeared to counteract. Even from difficulty itself he extracted facilities for the cultivation of his favourite art.

The intervals of school he devoted to drawing, with a degree of diligence and zeal, which would have honoured riper years, and made considerable proficiency, though possessing no better materials than pen and ink.

The Indians were accustomed annually to visit the colony, where they pitched their tents in the field, without either the formality of solicitation on their part, or receiving the least molestation from their Christian neighbours. On one of those visits the Indians manifested great pleasure at seeing the drawings of the young artist. Finding, however, that he possessed the inadequate material of ink only for his productions, they evinced additional gratification in teaching him the preparation of the red and yellow colours used in their decorations. This suggested to his affectionate and delighted mother, the necessary addition of blue, with which she immediately supplied him.

To contemplative retrospect, this circumstance exhibits an interesting scene. We scarcely know which most to admire, the artless yet communicative frankness of the Indians, or the singular coincidence, which, thus, in native simplicity, invested with the prismatic colours, the most eminent historical artist of any nation or age.

Another acquisition was, however, essential, which was intimated by several of the neighbours, who admired his pictures, and could not help expressing their solicitude for his possession of pencils. Having never seen any, the curiosity of the young artist, was naturally excited. And hearing a description of them, he soon found the means to supply the want of camel's hair by clipping the fur from a black cat: the appearance of grimalkin exhibiting a disconsolate instance either of some mystic depredation, or some fatal malady;—the latter of which Mr. West apprehended as the cause of the strangely piteous alteration in the sable gloss of this favourite domestic animal. Ingenuous however in disposition, and becomingly influenced by filial piety, while assiduously intent on his pleasing and laudable studies, the young artist communicated the real information to his father; and, as may be expected, the good sense and judicious affection of the parent, spared the severity of rebuke,

thus softened by the frankness of the boy, whose ingenuity claimed admiration and encouragement.

It is really interesting to trace the development of genius; and its successful combats with obstacles thus in early life. Originality is thus ascertained, while additional gratification is enjoyed in marking the progress of talent to eminence and distinction.

Thus supplied, the artist pursued his labours of delineating figures of animals and birds, though still with very imperfect means, yet with such evident marks of skill as excited the astonishment of the whole circle of visitors and acquaintances.

A relative of the West family, Mr. Pennington, of Philadelphia, visiting Springfield, was greatly surprised, and no less delighted at the productions which he saw exhibited in different parts of the house, as the efforts of so tender an age. This gentleman encouraged the artist by a kind promise of a box of paints and pencils:—which were soon sent from the city, with some prepared canvass, and likewise six engravings by Grevling.

This was an inestimable treasure. He gazed with rapture on the different articles: and, in the transports of delight, could hardly persuade himself of their entity. The arrival of this present must have created a scene most



affectingly pleasing to an intelligent mind. An interesting boy, but just entering on his eighth year, whose very felicity was a picture, but who had never seen any except his own productions, now rivetting his attention on the effects of an art which he knew not existed. Wrapt in silent wonder and admiration, he yet seems inclined to treat the whole as a pleasurable vision, enchanting him with illusive scenes; nor can he be satisfied of the reality, but by ascertaining the substance. He looks with enraptured eyes: he again touches the welcome treasure, to be assured that it is real. Such was the case with our young artist.

The repose of night was interrupted by cautious vigils over his invaluable possession. At break of day he arose to his favourite employment; and enamoured in the art to which his genius was devoted, he spent the whole day in a garret, and forgot the hours of school. Absenting himself thus for several days, the schoolmaster inquired the cause. Mrs. West, recollecting that she had seen Benjamin go up stairs after dinner, suspected that the painting had occasioned his neglect of school. Entering the garret, she found the artist most assiduously engaged. Her displeasure was instantly exchanged for admiration and delight, as she beheld the result of his in-



dustry. That inventive originality of mind, together with the perspicuity and energy which pre-eminently distinguish the works of West, was obviously seen unfolding its characteristic excellence on that occasion. Conscious talent, even in its earliest essay, disdained to confine its powers to literal imitation; nor could it lessen its native dignity by contenting itself with a production which required but ordinary application and skill. Feeling its innate ability, it already soared to transcendency of exertion. The attempt was great—was noble; it was advancing to certain success, when maternal affection, impelled by the mingled emotions of transport and wonder, interposed. The artist, not finding the engravings exactly to his taste, had formed from them a composition which displayed a signally pleasing demonstration of his superior genius. It is to be regretted, however, that the anxious solicitude of his mother did not suffer him to finish the picture, lest she should derogate from that perfection which she considered it already possessed, though a considerable portion of the canvas remained bare. This production of juvenile art must have possessed very considerable merit: after an interval of sixty-seven years, it was placed in the same room with the sublime picture of Christ Rejected; and the

painter himself acknowledged that there were inventive touches in the first essay which he never afterwards excelled. This interesting little work of early genius, is now exhibiting in West's Gallery, Newman-street.

In a short time, Mr. Pennington again visited Springfield; when he was most highly gratified with the pictures which so forcibly and pleasingly testified that the present of the box of paintings and engravings had not been sent in vain. During this visit, he invited the young artist to spend a few days at Philadelphia. Having obtained his father's approbation, he entered on his journey with extraordinary anticipations. The city presented scenes which abounded with novelties far beyond his conception, and filled him with overwhelming astonishment and delight.

Soon after his arrival, he devoted himself to the painting of a landscape, comprising the picturesque scenery of vessels on a river, and cattle grazing on the pastures of its verdant banks.

At this time, an occurrence transpired, which, possessing a similarity of coincidence with preceding circumstances, we may appropriately introduce:—

Williams, a painter at Philadelphia, carrying home a picture, was met by an intimate friend of Mr. Pennington's, who, on being informed

that it was sold, immediately ordered another. When completed, Mr. Shoemaker, the gentleman alluded to, desired the painter to send it to Mr. Pennington's: at whose house it was shewn to young West, in the presence of Williams. Attentively viewing the picture, the juvenile artist manifested extraordinary emotions, which instantly excited the particular observation of Williams, whose discernment induced him to regard the extreme sensibility of the boy, associated as it was with an evident acuteness and nicety marked in the eye of enlivened talent, as an indication of future eminence. He immediately felt an interest in the education of the boy, and entreated Mr. Pennington, that he might be indulged with those advantages which were conducive to the cultivation of his genius. Inquiring if he had read any books or the lives of great men, Williams was greatly amused by the artless answer of the interesting amateur, stating that he had read the Bible, and knew the history of those great and good men, whose lives are written in the Holy Scriptures.

This interview often formed a favourite topic of conversation with Williams, who evidently felt a peculiar gratification in contributing to the improvement of so promising a boy, in whom he saw the constituent qualities



of that character which should become the admiration of society ; he therefore lent him the works of Richardson and Fresnoy. These produced considerable effect on the mind of the artist, which soon became apparent to his friends. On reading the books, his parents were powerfully impressed with the interesting facts with which they abound, relative to the developement of talent ; and recollecting the advice of Peckover respecting their son, became more convinced of the propriety of indulging the bent of his mind.

It appears that his mind now soared above such scenes as usually interest the attention of boys of that age ; and he already seemed to feel the dignity and importance of talent, designed for eminence above the common spheres of life. The following anecdote, simple indeed, and ludicrous, yet indicates the enthusiastic, and lofty ideas which usually accompany extraordinary genius in its consciousness of superiority, and its anticipation of future years.

Shortly after his return to Springfield, Benjamin was invited by one of his schoolfellows to take a ride to a neighbouring plantation. At the appointed time, his companion brought the horse. West inquired how he was to ride ? “ Behind me,” replied his young friend. But the artist, in the stern dignity of ambi-

tious genius, as if aware of his future elevation, immediately declared, that he never would ride behind any body. "O, very well!" added the boy, who it seems was more influenced with humble complaisance; "you may take the saddle, and I will get up behind you." Proceeding thus on their excursion, they conversed on their future destinations in life. The boy observing that his father designed to apprentice him, West inquired, "To what business?"—"A tailor," replied his companion. "Surely," rejoined West, "you will never follow that trade"—ridiculing at the same time its proverbial femininity. The other, however, who was a shrewd, sensible lad, defended the choice, and insisted on the known reputation of the tradesman to whom he was to be apprenticed; adding, "But, what do you intend to be, Benjamin?" West answered, that he should like to be a painter. "A painter!" said the boy, "what sort of a trade is a painter? I never heard of such a thing."—"A painter," replied West, "is a companion for kings and emperors." "Surely you are mad," answered the boy, "for there are no such people in America." "Very true," said the young artist, "but there are plenty in other parts of the world." This reply excited still greater surprise in the mind of his humble friend, who instantly repeated, with some degree of emphasis, "You

are surely quite mad." West then asked him if he really intended to be a tailor? "Most certainly," replied the boy. "Then you may ride by yourself; for I will no longer keep your company," said the enthusiastic and irritated artist, and thus, in conscious importance, left his wondering companion, and returned home.

This circumstance, in connexion with the report already in circulation relative to the picture, in the painting of which he had absented himself from school, and which led to his visit to Philadelphia, greatly interested the juvenile circles at Springfield. The boys seemed quite indifferent to their customary amusements; and employed their hours of relaxation from school in drawing with chalk, and any other material which fell in their way.

In the following incident are recognised the first public patrons of the artist, as he was pleased himself to denominate them, and desired in grateful respect to record their names. Young West was in the habit of amusing himself in a cabinet-maker's shop, adjacent to his father's house. One day, some very large and beautiful boards of poplar attracting his attention, he observed, that they would do very well for drawing on. The owner gave him two or three of them, and the young artist immediately drew figures on them with ink, chalk, and charcoal. Mr. Wayne, one of



the gentlemen to whom allusion has already been made, as a patron of our artist, calling shortly after at Mr. West's, saw those efforts of juvenile skill, and was so exceedingly pleased, that with the permission of Benjamin, which he condescended to solicit with much kindness, he took several of the drawings home. But, neither the painter, nor his father, very highly estimated the productions, and consequently did not consider a very great favour conferred on Mr. Wayne. Next day, however, he called again, and expressing his high gratification at the improvement of Benjamin, and the evident mark of taste and skill observable in his paintings, gave him a dollar for each drawing he had taken, assuring him of his resolution to preserve them. Doctor Jonathan Morris, who was the other gentleman alluded to as the early patron of the artist, and who lived in the neighbourhood of Springfield, made him a present soon after of a few dollars for the purchase of materials.

About a year after his visit to Philadelphia, the artist was invited by Mr. Flower, one of the justices in the county of Chester, to spend a few weeks at his residence. Here young West enjoyed the kind and judicious attention of an intelligent and well-educated lady, lately arrived from England, as governess to the daughters of Mr. Flower, who some time before had suffered a severe bereavement in the

death of his wife. Having heard of the extraordinary talent which Benjamin had evinced, this excellent and accomplished woman realized a pleasure in communicating to him the essential instructions with which he was as yet unacquainted; and thus was he first informed of the Greeks and Romans; whose character and exploits—whose eminence and glory, and illustrious varieties of fortune—together with the affecting and adverse changes in their history, she represented to his view; and her most sanguine expectations relative to the influence and utility of her instruction, were fully answered.

Benjamin had not been long in this pleasing and advantageous situation, before a Mr. Ross, a respectable lawyer in the town of Lancaster, and an acquaintance of Mr. Flower, engaged the young artist to take the portraits of his wife and daughters, who it appears were remarkably handsome, and therefore afforded, in the opinion of his friends, a favourable opportunity for the display of his genius, in greater perfection. The performance justified their sentiment; and so admirable was his success in this interesting exertion of his talent, that the applications for portraits soon became more numerous than the young artist could conveniently answer. At this time, a Mr. Henry, an intelligent man, who had acquired considerable wealth, sent to the artist;

and during an interview, in which he admired the performances of early genius, observed, that had he the talent herein so admirably displayed, he would no longer waste his time on portraits, but would devote himself to historical painting. He proposed the Death of Socrates as a suitable subject. Finding that the artist was entirely unacquainted with the history of that philosopher, and of the concomitant incidents of his death, Mr. Henry immediately going to his library, took a volume of Plutarch, and read the pathetic narrative in question. The imagination of the artist became inspired with the subject, and he soon afterwards produced a drawing, which he submitted to the inspection of Mr. Henry, who considered it as justly descriptive of the probable scenes attending the event. Being requested to paint it, West expressed some diffidence, apprehending his inability to represent the slave that gave the poison, whom he considered to be naked. And in this figure he feared a failure, not having been accustomed to paint any but faces, and men clothed. Mr. Henry directly called in one of his workmen, a very handsome and well-formed young man, whose arms and breast were naked, "There is your model," said he; and the appearance of the young man thus introduced, very forcibly impressed the artist with the



conviction, that nature furnished ample instruction for the guidance of art.

West's picture excited considerable admiration of his talents, and recommended him to the notice of many respectable and eminent individuals. Among these was Dr. Smith, the Provost of the College at Philadelphia, who being struck with the performance, manifested a particular interest in the education of the artist. The doctor was a man of extensive learning, and of liberal sentiment. After admiring the picture, and having some conversation with West, he expressed a desire to instruct him in the essential acquisition of ancient literature. With the permission of his father, in consequence of the kind proposal of the provost, thus affording so favourable an opportunity for improvement, Benjamin went to Philadelphia, where his proficiency in those departments of education, judiciously selected and arranged by Dr. Smith, as best calculated for the future prospects and destination of the artist, answered the most flattering expectations, and gained him universal esteem.

During the period of his education at Philadelphia, West was afflicted with a fever; and in consequence of extreme weakness, was obliged to keep his bed, and to have the room darkened. While in this situation, he saw several forms of animals which were occa-

sioned, (though at the moment the secret seemed perfectly mysterious and inscrutable to the artist) by a diagonal knot-hole in the window-shutters, and which, on examination, he ascertained to be the cause of all those ludicrous visitants which had excited so much surprise and curiosity and the relation of whose mystic intrusions had frequently astonished his friends. As soon as he was able to leave his room, he reflected further on the subject, and by perforating one of the shutters horizontally, he arrived at the desired result; and though he had never heard of the Camera, he succeeded in its invention. On this occasion, he congratulated himself, with inexpressible emotions of joy; but mentioning the subject sometime afterwards to Williams the painter, he found that the discovery was already familiar, as that artist had before received a Camera from England. The circumstance, however, decidedly demonstrates that originality of conception which characterizes superior and real genius in its various applications and developements.

Benjamin now arrived at his sixteenth year, his father felt a solicitude for his being fixed in some established avocation. Though unwilling to repress those emanations of talent, to which he had so long been indulgent, and which he had been induced by the advice of Peckover to encourage, yet Mr. West was aware that

the profession of a painter was, on several accounts, objectionable. He not only considered it as yielding but precarious means of support, but likewise as subjecting him to unpleasant imputations from the society, whose tenets discountenanced such professions as were deemed merely ornamental.

Thus in suspense and anxiety, he consulted some of his neighbours on the subject; and a meeting of the society was convened to take the question into consideration, and publicly to express their opinions relative to a line of conduct now to be pursued in a secular appointment, the nature of which seemed to affect an established article of their discipline.

The friends assembled in the meeting-house, where considerable irritation seemed likely to result from the discussion. At length, however, one of the society, Mr. John Williamson, a man of exemplary character, universally respected for his piety and consistency, and possessing considerable influence, addressed the meeting. His usual style of impressive eloquence as a preacher, associated as it was with purity of manners, superiority of talent, and sound wisdom, seldom failed to command the attention of his hearers, and to impart conviction to their minds. Directing the observance of the assembly to the venerable Mr. West, and his excellent wife, he dwelt with evident esteem and gratification on



their truly Christian character, and enlarged, in his ingenuous, but just commendations of that irreproachable conduct, which had long secured them the respect and love of all who knew them. "They have," added the intelligent and liberal-minded preacher, "ten children, whom they have carefully brought up in the fear of God, and in the Christian religion: and the youth whose lot in life we are now convened to consider, is Benjamin, their youngest child. It is known to you all, that God is pleased, from time to time, to bestow upon some men extraordinary gifts of mind; and you need not be told by how wonderful an inspiration their son has been led to cultivate the art of painting. It is true that our tenets deny the utility of that art to mankind. But God has bestowed on the youth a genius for the art; and can we believe that Omniscience bestows His gifts but for great purposes? What God has given, who shall dare to throw away? Let us not estimate Almighty wisdom by our notions;—let us not presume to arraign His judgment by our ignorance, but in the evident propensity of the young man, be assured that we see an impulse of the Divine hand operating towards some high and beneficent end." This forcible appeal to the reason, as well as the religious faith, of the assembly, delivered by a man whom all esteemed for the purity of his life, no less

than for the transcendency, of his knowledge and soundness of judgment, led to a conclusion in favour of the young artist. Shortly after, a private meeting was held at his father's house, when Benjamin was by unanimous desire present. On this occasion he was the subject of an affecting solemnity, in which the friends formally devoted him to that sphere, which the genius of his mind indicated as most congenial with the wisdom of divine providence. The interesting youth, placed by his venerable and worthy father, attracted the solicitude of all present. Some time was spent in silent devotion. One of the society then delivered a short but sensible address on the wisdom of God, representing its various proceedings in the accomplishment of the divine purposes,—and the special selection of different characters for high and important ends,—and recommending submission to the divine will on the present unusual occasion.

Mr. Williamson then rose, and in his accustomed strain of eloquence, continued the subject of his former exhortation. Having observed the particular tenets and discipline which induced them to discountenance those arts which were regarded more as ornamental than useful, among which that of painting was included as a superfluous acquisition, he proceeded to enlarge on the subject, then claiming

their special attention, in the character and destination of the extraordinary youth before them. Alluding to the established maxims which prohibited such pursuits, he added, "In this proscription we have included the study of the fine arts, for we see them applied only to embellish pleasures, and to strengthen our inducements to gratify our senses at the expense of our immortal claims. But, because we have seen painting put to this derogatory use, and have, in consequence, prohibited the cultivation of it among us, are we sure that it is not one of those gracious gifts which God has bestowed on the world, not to add to the sensual pleasures of man, but to facilitate his improvement as a social and a moral being? The fine arts are called the offspring and the emblems of peace. The Christian religion itself is the doctrine of good-will to man. Can those things which only prosper in peace, be contrary to the Christian religion? But, it is said, that the fine arts soften and emasculate the mind. In what way? Is it by drawing those who study them from the robust exercises which enable nations and people to make war with success? Is it by lessening the disposition of mankind to destroy one another, and by taming the audacity of their animal fierceness? Is it for such a reason as this that we profess to live in unison and friendship, not only



among ourselves, but with all the world—that we should object to the cultivation of those arts which disarm the natural ferocity of man? We may as well be told that the doctrine of peace and life ought to be proscribed, because it is pernicious to the practice of war and slaughter, as that the arts which call on man to exercise his intellectual powers more than his physical strength, can be contrary to Christianity, and adverse to the benevolence of the deity. I speak not, however, of the fine arts as the means of amusement, nor the study of them as pastime to fill up the vacant hours of business; though even as such, the taste for them deserves to be regarded as a manifestation of the divine favour, inasmuch as they dispose the heart to kind and gentle inclinations: for, I think them ordained by God for some great and holy purpose. Do we not know that the professors of the fine arts are commonly men greatly distinguished by special gifts of a creative and discerning spirit? If there be any thing in the usual course of human affairs, which exhibits the immediate interposition of the deity, it is in the progress of the fine arts; in which it would appear he often raises up those great characters, the spirit of whose imaginations have an interminable influence on posterity, and who are themselves separated and elevated among mankind, by the name of men of

genius. Can we believe that all this is not for some useful purpose? What that purpose is, ought we to pretend to investigate? Let us rather reflect that the Almighty God has been pleased among us, and in this remote wilderness, to endow, with the rich gifts of a peculiar spirit, that youth who has now our common consent to cultivate his talents for an art, which, according to our humble and human judgment, was previously thought an unnecessary ministration to the sensual propensities of our nature. May it be demonstrated by the life and works of the artist, that the gift of God has not been bestowed on him in vain, nor the motives of the beneficent inspiration which induce us to suspend our particular tenets, prove barren of religious or moral effect. On the contrary, let us confidently hope that this occurrence has been for good, and that the consequences which may arise in the society of this new world, from the example which Benjamin West will be enabled to give, will be such a love of the arts of peace as shall tend to draw the ties of affection closer, and diffuse over a wide extent of community the interests and blessings of fraternal love."

When the orator had concluded this address, the women kissed the artist, and the men, successively laying their hands on his head, implored the divine blessing, that the future

exertions of his genius might fully justify those views which had led them to alter, in so signal a manner, their religious discipline in favour of an art which they had hitherto proscribed.

Shortly after this decision, thus unanimously avowed, Benjamin proceeded to Lancaster. A melancholy bereavement, however, in the death of his mother soon called for his return home, where he was necessarily detained for some time.

In August, 1756, he went to Philadelphia. We now advert to more public transactions, which indeed exhibit a striking contrast to those scenes which we should naturally expect to witness in the early character of one whose life had been so recently dedicated to the arts of peace.

General Braddock's army having been destroyed, the inhabitants of Pennsylvania considered themselves in imminent danger, and the assembly of the province determined to raise a body of militia. Of the regiment of Chester county, Mr. Wayne was colonel. West, on viewing the military in their first parade, imbibed in glowing ardour, the spirit which actuated those noble-minded and valiant companions, who subsequently distinguished themselves in their country's cause.

The youths of Pennsylvania became ardent



in their military devotion,—and applied themselves to the cultivation of those principles, and to that improvement in their martial exercises, which became so successful in preserving the glory and independence of the state. West made uncommon proficiency in his new pursuits, and soon excelled even young Wayne, who had been drilled by some of the best disciplinarians of his father's corps, and, who had undertaken to drill his companion. In a short time West went to Lancaster, where the boys having formed a corps of military, inspired with the general ardour then prevailing, appointed him to the command. His brother Samuel also, an enterprising youth, influenced by the spirit of the day, was appointed a captain in Colonel Wayne's regiment. Engaged in the undertaking, which was soon afterwards pursued by the troops under the command of General Forbes, Captain West was ordered with his company of sharpshooters to search for the relics of Braddock's army. Several officers of the 42d regiment accompanied. Major sir Peter Halket, who had lost a father and a brother in the dreadful scene of desolation which befel the army, was likewise among the party engaged in this affecting enterprise. Some Indian warriors, who had returned to the British cause, were also of the number, as likely to be the surest guide to the fatal spot, where the remains of those who fell on that disastrous occasion, were to be found.

The major had been informed by an Indian warrior, that on the day of battle, he saw an officer fall near a tree, which he felt persuaded he could point out,—the circumstance having been most powerfully imprinted on his recollection, by seeing a young subaltern run towards the officer, apparently to assist him, and who had no sooner reached the spot than he was instantly killed, and fell across the body of the other. In consequence of this narration, the major felt deeply impressed that the two officers were his father and his brother.

Proceeding along those bewildering forests, which added gloom and anxiety to their pen- sive expedition, they were frequently affected by the sight of skulls and skeletons,—the ap- palling testimonies of suffering endured by their friends, relations, and countrymen in arms, who had fallen victims, if not to the sword, yet to the voracious jaws of wild beasts, or had perished with hunger, or pined in wea- riness and despair, unable to find their way to the plantations.

Approaching the place where the destruc- tive scene was witnessed, the Indian who had related the death of the two officers, stopped. The attention of the whole party was instantly directed towards him, as if in eager yet mournful anticipation of soon realizing the details of woe. The Indian, with a kind of anxious inquisitiveness, surveying the different parts occupied on the day of battle, endea-

voured to ascertain the precise spot where he was stationed, in order that he might more certainly recognise the tree near which the officers fell. On a sudden he rushed forward, and entered the wood. The soldiers resting their arms, were absorbed in thoughtful suspense, as if each individual were about to mourn over the relics of a father or a brother. The stillness of death prevailed. All was silence and gloom. But a shrill cry from the distant guide, soon announced his arrival at the fatal spot. The Indians immediately gave signs for the troops to follow. The expedition was regarded by all as a pious service. The Indian warriors were filled with reverence and dread. They gazed at their companions and commanders with a sort of mournful veneration. The whole company engaged in this unusual and distressing undertaking, were deeply affected. As they approached the Indian warrior, he pointed to the tree, of which he had been in search. Captain West's men surrounded the spot, and the Indians removed the leaves which had covered the ground. Sir Peter Halket and the other officers, who were also of the pensive circle, gazed, in sad solemnity on the affecting procedure, anticipating every instant, in the removal of the leaves, the appearance of the lamented remains. At length, the skeletons were seen exactly in the position as the Indian



described. The officers looked at them for some time in silent melancholy; the major recollecting that his father had an artificial tooth, conceived that he might ascertain if they were those remains which, from the account of the Indian, he had apprehended. The Indians, accordingly, being ordered to remove the skeleton of the youth, that of the other was more closely observed. After a short examination, major Halket exclaimed, "It is my father!" and instantly fell into the arms of his friends. A grave was then dug, and the skeletons being interred, a highland plaid was laid over them, and the burial performed with the accustomed honours.

This interesting scene was proposed by Mr. West to lord Grosvenor, when he purchased the Death of Wolfe, as a suitable subject for pictorial representation. His lordship, however, though coinciding with the opinion of the artist, considered, that as it was not recorded in history, and but little known, it might fail to interest the attention of the public. Mr. West was prevented by other engagements from executing the design on his own account.

When the artist returned to Philadelphia, he again resided with Mr. Clarkson, his brother-in-law. During that time he advanced considerably in improvement under the instructions of Dr. Smith. His intervals of

study he devoted to portrait-painting : and the peculiar circumstances of his history, together with the reports of his skill, and more than all, his evident proficiency for his years, gained him great employment. His price was two guineas and a half for a head, and five guineas for a half-length ; and he maintained a becoming economy in his expenditure, endeavouring to provide himself with means, to enable him at some future period to visit those parts of Europe, celebrated for the productions of genius, and where he might obtain greater accessions of knowledge and skill.

Among a few pictures in the possession of governor Hamilton, was a St. Ignatius. This, not knowing its merits, West obtained permission, through the medium of Pennington, to copy. The copy was universally admired. Dr. Smith, who expressed his warmest commendations, observed to West, the possibility and art of characteristic painting ; sir Joshua Reynolds had, however, previously exemplified its superiority and excellence. The Doctor, not aware of this fact, had his portrait drawn in the attitude of the St. Ignatius. This performance gained additional celebrity to the painter. A Mr. Cox, who had intended to order a likeness for his daughter, immediately altered the design of his visit on seeing this portrait of the Doctor, and as it seemed to display a superior talent

for historical painting, he desired the artist to choose a subject, and execute it as he pleased.

Having, in the course of his biblical reading, been impressed with the trial of Susannah, he selected that as his subject; and the performance was such as to secure the patronage and unqualified approbation of his employer.

Soon after this he proceeded to New York, where he continued to pursue his favourite art, with increasing assiduity and success. Seeing a beautiful Flemish picture, representing a hermit engaged in the devotion of prayer before a lamp, he felt strongly inclined to produce a companion to it,—a man reading by candle-light. In order to obtain the necessary effect, he prevailed on his landlord to sit in a dark closet, with a book and candle before him; and by this ingenious contrivance, independent of having read of any dissertations on the subject of his design, he accomplished the work to admirable perfection. Not having the advantages of instruction in this most essential subject, he was left entirely to that inventive and powerful genius, of which he had before given so many demonstrations. About the same time, he produced a copy of Belisarius, which, together with the picture of the student, was purchased by a Mr. Myers.

During his stay at Philadelphia, West raised



his price for half-length portraits to ten guineas; and, by industry and economy, had acquired a sufficiency for a short excursion to Italy, where he conceived he might obtain that improvement in the fine arts, which he considered indispensable to the future prosperity of his profession. While taking the portrait of Mr. Kelly, a respectable gentleman, who had admired his talents, the artist introduced the subject of his desired voyage, having previously heard that a vessel was fitting out for Italy. A dearth being expected in Italy, Messrs. Rutherford and Jackson, of Leghorn, had written to their correspondent, Mr. Allen, of Philadelphia, for a cargo of wheat and flour. Mr. Allen, thinking it a favourable opportunity for sending his son, in order that he might see something of the world, was pleased to find so agreeable and intelligent a companion for him as West. Having received fifty guineas from the liberality of Mr. Kelly, who, in addition to his payment for his portrait, had given him a letter for that amount to his agents, the artist sailed for Gibraltar. After a pleasant voyage, the ship arrived safely at Leghorn. Before West left Philadelphia, he had committed his money to old Mr. Allen, and had received a letter of credit on Messrs. Jackson and Rutherford. As soon as these gentlemen were informed of the object of his journey, they

testified every attention, and treated him with the greatest respect. In order to facilitate his success at Rome, they gave him letters of introduction to cardinal Albani, and some of the most distinguished characters.

On the 10th of July, 1760, he arrived at Rome. His first friend in this capital was Mr. Robinson, afterward Lord Grantham, who had no sooner heard of the arrival of a young American quaker, come to study the fine arts, than he invited him to his house, and insisted on his staying to dinner. Finding that the artist had letters of introduction to several gentlemen, who were his particular friends, Mr. Robinson observed, that he was going to a party that evening, in which he expected to meet them, and requested West to accompany him. On that occasion, the artist was introduced to some of the most eminent characters in Rome, when it was arranged that he should proceed the next morning to the palaces.

Such were the strange ideas entertained by the Roman nobility, that they seemed unable to conceive in any way of the American, but by admitting that he had been bred a savage, solely on account of his being a native of America. They all felt anxious, therefore, to observe his first introduction to those works of genius which were the glory and boast of their country, and the admiration of the

world. Accordingly, at the appointed time, a grand procession was formed of above thirty of the most superb equipages, filled with some of the most distinguished characters in Europe.

In order to witness that force of impression which they anticipated as likely to be evinced by so singular a character, on seeing the most exquisite perfection of Roman greatness, it was resolved that the Apollo should be first shown. Such was the situation of the statue, being enclosed within folding doors, that it could be instantly in full view. The young quaker was stationed so as to possess the most advantageous command. On each side the spectators were arranged, whose countenances evinced the intense curiosity by which each mind was influenced. While every eye seemed intent on the American artist, the doors were suddenly thrown open, when under an impression different from what he expected, and not considering the forcible import of the expression, he exclaimed, "My God! how like it is to a young Mohawk warrior!" Seeing his surprise, and hearing the exclamation, the Italians requested Mr. Robinson to translate it. The observation, however, seemed more to excite their disapprobation than pleasure, which Mr. Robinson intimated to the artist, and desired him to give a more explicit account of the Mohawk Indians. His



description, which sustained no injury from the translation by Mr. Robinson, evidently afforded great gratification to the Italians, who had before felt no inconsiderable mortification and chagrin at the allusion made in the resemblance of their proudest object of national skill to a savage. West described the education of the Mohawks, and their admirable formation, dexterity, and vigour. "I have seen them often," said he, "standing in that very attitude, and pursuing, with an intense eye, the arrow which they had just discharged from the bow." Hearing this, the Italians confessed, with great approbation, that a more correct criticism had seldom been expressed. The other works did not excite those emotions which might have been expected. Those of Raphael did not forcibly impress him, till he had repeatedly seen them, and reflected on them alone. The works of Michael Angelo interested him in a still less degree. Though he saw the evident characteristics of masterly art, yet he conceived that the painter had failed, except in the Moses, to give a probable character to his subjects.

The statues ascribed to Phidias, most powerfully interested the attention of Mr. West. The human figure he admired as a majestic masterpiece of skill; but he considered the smallness of the horse as truly absurd and ridiculous. Whatever was the avowed principle

on which so much disproportion was observed by the ancients, namely, of giving effect to the principal figure, it certainly appears ludicrous in the view of modern art.

After visiting the palaces, Mr. Robinson, in the evening, took Mr. West to witness a magnificent ceremony of religion. Having entered the church, he was unusually struck with the extreme contrast between the simplicity of that worship to which he had been accustomed, and the pompous ceremonies which then, in all their imposing and yet fanciful splendours, were immediately before his eyes. But among all the extraordinary scenes which he had that evening witnessed, none affected his mind more forcibly than the appearance of want and misery which attracted his notice as he came out of the church.

Having been bred in a part of the world where beggary was unknown—where social benevolence and general hospitality precluded the sufferings of destitute poverty, his feelings were most deeply wounded at seeing so many miserable creatures thronging around, and in all the haggard woes of indolence and penury, imploring the pittance of each passenger, in order to obtain the scanty support of precarious and abject dependence. Many of these wretched beings knew Mr. Robinson, whose charity had often administered to their wants; and seeing him, therefore, on the present

occasion, accompanied, as they imagined, by another Englishman, they became imboldened in their clamorous appeals.

As they were returning from church, an elderly woman followed them, imploring their charity;—Mr. West gave her a piece of Roman coin, which he had received in change, of the value of which he was not aware.—Shortly afterwards, engaged in conversation, he felt some one pull at his coat, and on turning round, recognised the woman to whom he had given the money. Suspecting that he had given a trivial sum, much to her dissatisfaction, as the cause of her return, he was exceedingly surprised on learning through the medium of Mr. Robinson, that as it was a two-penny piece which he had given her, she had returned to give him the change, having asked for only a farthing.

Being one evening in company with Mr. Gavin Hamilton, the painter, at a coffee-house, where British travellers usually resorted, West became the subject of a most interesting effusion delivered by a well-known, and most celebrated improvisatore in Italy. He was a man of venerable appearance, and entered the room with his guitar hung from his shoulders,—when as he advanced to their table, Mr. Hamilton accosted him by the name of Homer. The old man requested Mr. Hamilton to give him a subject. Immediately the Italians sur-



rounded them to gaze at Mr. West, of whom they had heard, and witnessing Homer's request, remarked that he had exhausted his store of entertainment. Mr. Hamilton then took the opportunity to observe that he had a new subject to propose: and informing him that Mr. West was an American come to study the fine arts, intimated the circumstance as supplying a novel and interesting theme. Homer instantly caught the idea, and having prepared his instrument, commenced a strain of flowing eloquence, in which he expatiated on the ancient darkness which enveloped the regions of America,—represented the seraph of knowledge instructing Columbus in his enterprise,—directed the imagination of his hearers to the rude, yet sublimely interesting scenery of the new world,—and exhibited as if by inspiration, in living visions, the tribes of Indians pursuing the chase, or engaged in their appalling sacrifices. “But,” added he, “the beneficent spirit of improvement is ever on the wing, and, like the ray from the throne of God, which inspired the conception of the Virgin, it has descended on this youth, and the hope which ushered in its new miracle, like the star which guided the magi to Bethlehem, has led him to Rome. Methinks I behold in him an instrument chosen by heaven, to raise in America the taste for those arts which elevate the nature of man,—an assurance that

his country will afford a refuge to science and knowledge, when in the old age of Europe they shall have forsaken her shores. But all things of heavenly origin, like the glorious sun, move westward; and truth and art have their periods of shining and of night. Rejoice then, O venerable Rome, in thy divine destiny; for though darkness overshadow thy seats, and though thy mitred head must descend into the dust, as deep as the earth that now covers thy ancient helmet and imperial diadem, thy spirit, immortal and undecayed, already spreads towards a New World, where, like the soul of man in paradise, it will be perfected in virtue and beauty more and more."

About this time, Mr. West was introduced to Mengs, then in the summit of popularity, who was struck, like every other person, with the extraordinary instance of the American engaged in the study of the fine arts, and requested him to produce a specimen of his talent in drawing.

Having never learnt to draw, he felt diffident in the idea of submitting any thing in the form pursued by the students, and requested Mr. Robinson to sit for his portrait, which he would shew to Mengs. Having agreed to the proposal, it was kept a profound secret, except to two of their intimate acquaintances. When the performance was completed, it was agreed, that the public opinion should be

ascertained respecting its merits, previously to its being submitted to Mengs: and the following interesting and amusing scene was witnessed, much to the gratification of all parties.

One of the gentlemen in the secret was Mr. Crespigné, who twice a year held a grand assembly at his house. It was proposed on one of these occasions to exhibit the portrait. All the nobility and distinguished strangers in Rome were invited. The painting was placed in a suitable part of the room. Among those who first arrived, were amateurs and artists, to whom it was known that Robinson was sitting to Mengs for his portrait, which they concluded must be that which they then saw. On examination, they unanimously observed that they had never seen any painting of Mengs so well coloured. Mr. West was then sitting on a sofa behind, impressed with the mingled emotions of agitation and pleasure, occasioned by the observations which were passing, and which were communicated to him at different intervals by Mr. Robinson. As the assemblage of visitors increased, the picture became still more an object of attraction, and interested the general conversation. Mr. Dance, an Englishman of penetration and sagacity, was observed looking at the portrait with a particularly scrutinizing eye. Mr.



Jenkins, who had marked the incident, turned to Dance, and, congratulating Robinson on obtaining so good a portrait, remarked, "that he must now acknowledge that Mengs could colour as well as he could draw." Dance, in reply, observed that the picture excelled in that respect the usual productions of Mengs, but said, that he did not consider the drawing equal to the general style of that artist. In consequence of this observation, some debate took place, in which the company convening around participated. Thinking this a favourable moment to produce the effect desired, Mr. Crespigné told Jenkins that he was mistaken, and that Dance was correct, for that the picture was not painted by Mengs. "By whom then," exclaimed every one, "for there is no other painter now in Rome capable of executing any thing so good?" "By that young gentleman there," said Mr. Crespigné. Immediately every eye was fixed on Mr. West, and the Italians instantly testified their unbounded gratification, and in their customary manner of demonstrating their transport of approbation and delight, ran and embraced him. Thus the young artist was acknowledged by the most competent judges, as second only to the most eminent painter in Rome. Even Mengs, when the portrait was submitted to his inspection, expressed his approbation in the warmest terms,

and displayed a liberality of spirit truly honourable to his character, in giving his best advice to Mr. West.

Severe indisposition, occasioned by incessant application and exertion, obliged him to return to Leghorn, where he might retreat from those extraordinary scenes which had successively attracted his attention.

He was received by Messrs. Jackson and Rutherford with the utmost kindness. The British Consul at Leghorn, Mr. (afterwards sir John) Dick and his lady also treated him with kind attention and solicitude, and obtained for him permission to use the imperial baths. He soon recovered sufficiently to resume his pursuits in the capital. But suffering a relapse, he was under the necessity of again returning to Leghorn. He however again enjoyed a speedy recovery from the fever, but his complaint had affected his ankle to that degree that it threatened the loss of the limb; and it was not till after a distressing period of eleven months that he was perfectly cured.

During this period, he received the most flattering and encouraging testimonies of esteem. Sir Horace Mann, the marquesses Creni and Ricardi, the late lord Cooper, and many others of the British nobility manifested their friendship towards him in such a manner as made the most lasting impressions on his mind.

In the mean time, his friends in a distant part of the world had not forgotten him. On the return of the ship to Philadelphia, Messrs. Jackson and Rutherford communicated the account of Robinson's portrait to Mr. Allen. The very day Mr. Allen received their letter, Mr. Hamilton, governor of Pennsylvania, the principal members of the government, and the most respectable citizens of Philadelphia were dining with him. Mr. Allen read the letter, and specified the sum which West left in his hands, at the time of his departure from his native shores, observing that he apprehended his resources must be nearly exhausted. But, added he, with evident fervour of interest in the young artist's welfare, "I regard this young man as an honour to the country, and as he is the first that America has sent to cultivate the fine arts, he shall not be frustrated in his studies, for I have resolved to write to my correspondents at Leghorn, to give him, from myself, whatever money he may require." Governor Hamilton, who felt impressed with this generous expression of disinterested munificence, remarked, in the same spirit of benevolent friendship, "I think exactly as you do, sir, but you shall not have all the honour of it yourself, and, therefore I beg that you will consider me as joining you in the responsibility of the credit." Hence originated a fortunate coincidence in favour of the artist, who,



when he went to the bankers, previously to his departure from Florence, for the purpose of taking the sum of ten pounds, was most agreeably surprised to find that his wants had been anticipated by his kind and liberal patrons at Philadelphia. While he was waiting in the bank, a letter arrived, on reading which, the gentleman informed West, that "its contents would probably afford him unexpected pleasure, as it instructed them to give him unlimited credit."

Mr. West then proceeded to Bologna, where he studiously investigated every celebrated work within the reach of his observation. Thence he went to Venice. In this tour he carefully attended to the judicious advice of Mengs, to see and examine every thing deserving of his attention, and after making a few drawings, to go to Florence, and observe what has been done for art in the collections there; then to proceed to Bologna, and study the works of the Carracci; afterwards to visit Parma, and examine, attentively, the pictures of Corregio; and then to go to Venice and view the productions of Tintoretti, Titian, and Paul Veronese. And having made this tour to return to Rome.

After his return to the capital, West devoted himself with his customary diligence and ardour, to his studies. Here he painted a picture of Cimon and Iphigenia, and another of Angelica and Madoro. These obtained consi-

derable approbation, and fully accorded with the estimate which Mengs had formed of the young artist's genius. He had now formed the intention to return to America, with a view to proceed in his profession, in that part of the world endeared to him not only by birth, but by so many interesting considerations of friendship and patronage. But, receiving a letter from his father, who advised him that as peace was then concluded between France and England, he could wish him to go home for a short time, before he returned to America; his attention was directed towards England as the next sphere of his travels, and which being the mother country, was still regarded as home by the inhabitants of the New State. Having mentioned his intention to Mr. Wilcox, that gentleman introduced him to Dr. Patoune, a literary character, who was then waiting in hopes of meeting with an agreeable fellow-traveller homeward.

The Doctor then went to Florence while the artist proceeded to Leghorn to bid farewell to those kind friends, whose attention and liberality had made an indelible impression on his heart. It was likewise arranged, that the Doctor should remain at Parma while West finished his copy of the St. Jerome of Corregio, which he had begun, when on his visit to that city, in company with Mr. Mathews.

The performance far exceeded the most

flattering expectation, and the academy of Parma elected Mr. West a member: an honour which the academies of Florence and Bologna had also conferred.

The prince hearing that a young American had produced a copy of the St. Jerome of Corregio in a superior style beyond all that had ever been seen by the oldest academicians, expressed a desire that the artist should be introduced to him; and understanding that he was from Pennsylvania, and a quaker, he appeared still more anxious, as he had heard of the interesting peculiarities of the sect, distinguished by Christian simplicity, and of the truly excellent William Penn.

Mr. West was therefore invited to court, and was introduced to his highness by the chief minister. Considering that it would be right on that occasion to regulate his conduct by such as was observed in the court of London, Mr. West kept his hat on. The courtiers were evidently struck with astonishment at this singular behaviour, while the prince observed it with marked gratification.

When the travellers had arrived in France, an incident occurred which assumed not so flattering an aspect as the long series of agreeable circumstances to which the artist had been accustomed. Hearing a noise in the yard of the inn, while breakfast was preparing, the Doctor looked out of the window and



inquired the cause. Having learnt that two Englishmen were arrived at that inn, a considerable mob had collected, and the moment they saw the Doctor, vociferated their menaces, and became absolutely outrageous. The peace of 1763 having but recently occurred, the travellers conceived that the disturbance must have arisen from some cause of a political nature. They therefore summoned the landlord, who observed to them, "that the people had indeed assembled in a tumultuous manner round the inn on hearing that two Englishmen were in the house, but that they might make themselves perfectly easy, as he had sent to inform the magistrates of the riot." A magistrate who arrived shortly after, being introduced to the travellers, addressed them in terms the most respectful and generous. "I am sorry" said he, "that this occurrence should have happened, because had I known in time, I should, on hearing that you were Englishmen, have come with the other magistrates to express to you the sentiments of respect which we feel towards your illustrious nation; but, since it has not been in our power to give you that testimony of our esteem, on the contrary, since we are necessitated by our duty to protect you, I assure you that I feel exceedingly mortified. I trust, however, that you will suffer no inconvenience, for the people are dispersing, and you will be

able to leave the town in safety." This place," he added, "is a manufacturing town, which has been almost ruined by the war. Our goods went to the ocean from Marseilles and Toulon; but the vigilance of your fleets ruined our trade, and these poor people, who have felt the consequence, consider not the real cause of their distress. However, although the populace do not look beyond the effects which immediately press upon themselves, there are many among us well acquainted with the fountain-head of the misfortunes which afflict France, and who know that it is less to you than to ourselves that we ought to ascribe the disgrace of the late war. You had a man at the head of your government, (meaning lord Chatham), and your counsellors are men. But it is the curse of France that she is ruled by one who is, in fact, but the agent and organ of valets and strumpets. The court of France is no longer the focus of the great men of the country, but a band of profligates that have driven away the great. This state of things, however, cannot last long; the reign of the Pompadours must draw to an end, and Frenchmen will one day take a terrible revenge for the insults which they suffer in being regarded only as the materials of those who pander on the prodigality of the court."

In Paris, Mr. West remained a short time

to examine such works as were considered worthy of attention; and then proceeded to England. He arrived here on the 20th of August, 1763. He had not the most distant intention to reside in England; but by that combination of auspicious incidents, from which it should seem that fortune had marked him for her own, his views of returning to America were exchanged for prospects which most urgently invited his continuance in the capital of Britain. Soon after his arrival in London, Mr. West had the happiness to find some of his early friends, who had come from America on a visit to their relations in this country. Among these were Mr. Allen, Dr. Smith, and governor Hamilton. The houses of Mr. Allen and the governor, had been the seats of hospitality to many British officers, who, in the course of the war, visited Philadelphia. Related to persons of distinction in London, the officers embraced the opportunity to introduce their American friends; and thus testified their grateful remembrance of the kindness and attention which they had formerly experienced. Mr. West, therefore, as the friend of the other gentlemen, shared the advantages, and often associated with some of the most distinguished characters, in their splendid parties.

Having made a tour, in which he examined the works of art in various places, Mr.



West fixed his abode in London, and soon became acquainted with the eminent characters of the day, both of literature and of the arts. Dr. Patoune, his fellow-traveller from Rome, introduced him to Reynolds, with whom he enjoyed an uninterrupted friendship.

It was no sooner known that he intended to practise, than he received visits from every artist of distinction and celebrity. At this time he lodged in Bedford-street, Covent-garden, where he executed his picture, (his first performance in England) of Angelica and Madoro. This, with the Cimon and Iphigenia, which he painted during his stay at Rome, he was advised by Reynolds and Wilson to send to the exhibition in Spring-gardens. His productions were thus introduced to the public, who soon testified that approbation which the skill of the artist so justly merited.

About this time, Dr. Markham, master of Westminster-school, having invited him to a dinner, he was introduced to Dr. Johnson, Mr. Burke, Mr. Cracherode, and Mr. Dyer. Shortly after the Doctor introduced him to Dr. Johnson, bishop of Worcester; Dr. Newton, bishop of Bristol; and Dr. Drummond, archbishop of York. These eminent divines manifested the greatest liberality, and encouraged the artist by their patronage. Dr. Newton desired him to paint the Parting of Hector and Andromache. The bishop likewise sat for his por-

trait, which was executed by the artist, with a sketch in the back-ground of the picture already mentioned. The bishop of Worcester engaged him to paint the Return of the Prodigal Son.

Admiring the genius of the artist, and anxious to patronise so deserving a character, lord Rockingham offered him seven hundred pounds per annum to paint historical subjects for his mansion. The offer was certainly liberal, and also inviting, as it opened the prospect of permanent advantage; but on taking the advice of his friends, who thought he should not confine himself to one patron, Mr. West declined the engagement.

He had now formed the intention to return to America, in order to be married to a lady for whom he had previously entertained an attachment. Informing Mr. Allen and Dr. Smith of the circumstance, it was so arranged that the bride came to England with Mr. West's father, and the marriage took place on the 2d of September, 1765, at the church of St. Martin's in the Fields.

Archbishop Drummond was a constant and liberal patron of the artist, and manifested on every occasion a solicitude to promote his interests, in connexion with the cultivation of the fine arts in this country. Mr. West was often invited to the archbishop's table, and treated with every mark of friendship and

esteem. On one occasion West was desired to paint Agrippina landing with the ashes of Germanicus. Having read to the artist the story as related by Tacitus, and commented on the different circumstances, Dr. Drummond expressed the specific subjects of the picture. West drew the sketch that same evening, and much to the surprise of the archbishop, as well as gratification, submitted it next morning to his inspection. While the artist was engaged in this performance, his grace used every exertion to obtain encouragement from other quarters. It was his earnest wish that West might be enabled to devote his talents to historical painting. For this purpose, he endeavoured to raise a fund of three thousand guineas. However, after a subscription of fifteen hundred pounds, the idea was abandoned, as it met with comparatively little support, in circles where the arts are warranted to look for patronage.

In 1766, the artist applied to bishop Newton, dean of St. Paul's to paint, gratuitously, a religious subject for the cathedral. Soon after, when dining at the bishop's in company with Reynolds, he intimated the idea which that eminent artist instantly caught with eagerness and pleasure. West having proposed the giving of the Law on Sinai as a suitable subject, Reynolds offered to paint a Nativity as his contribution. The plan was introduced with



all due formality to the dean and chapter, whose cordial approbation it had obtained. In addition to this it was approved by the lord mayor, the archbishop of Canterbury, and the king. But Dr. Newton having omitted to ask the consent of Dr. Terrick, the bishop, whose veto was supreme in this respect, as possessing the official authority of the diocese, the design was frustrated—the prelate exclaiming, “I have heard of the proposition, and as I am head of the cathedral of the metropolis, I will not suffer the doors to be opened to introduce popery.”

After this, West, aware of the important purposes which would be accomplished in favour of the arts by the introduction of pictures into the church, sent a proposal to paint an altar-piece for the church of St. Stephen's, Walbrook. This proposal was received with approbation. His friend Mr. Wilcox soon after gave him another subject, which he executed for the cathedral of Rochester.

Notwithstanding the recent failure of his purpose relative to the subscription, the archbishop resolved to exert himself further in promoting the interest of Mr. West, and the prosperity of his art. Concluding from the general indifference, which was but too apparent among the higher circles, that the surest means of success would be to obtain the patronage of his majesty, and aware that important advan-

tages would ensue, the archbishop took the earliest opportunity to introduce the subject to the royal attention. Such was the propriety with which his grace conducted the purpose, that it was speedily realized, even beyond his expectations. The king expressed his desire to see the artist, and also the picture, an account of which had been communicated by the archbishop, who at the same time informed his majesty of the interesting subjects of the frequent visits to which West had previously been invited. It seems that the conversation occupied more time than the etiquette of the drawing-room generally admits; and a lady of eminent rank having overheard its import, influenced apparently by officious anticipation, instead of returning home, proceeded immediately to Mr. West's house, and concealing her name, announced the good fortune which she considered awaiting the artist.

The same evening a messenger was dispatched to desire Mr. West to be in attendance with the picture on the following day at the queen's house. Mr. West obeyed the order, and his majesty soon entered the room in which the artist was waiting. Having looked at the picture for some time, the king inquired if it was in a proper light; and being informed that it was not the most advantageous, he was conducted through several apartments, till a suitable situation was found. His majesty

then brought in the queen, to whom he introduced Mr. West with a degree of interest expressive of friendly attention and respect. While the queen was admiring the picture, his majesty related the history of the subject represented, and particularly observed the fact of the sketch having been formed one evening after the artist had received the instruction from the archbishop of York. The king then remarked to Mr. West, "There is another subject, which corresponds to this one, and which I believe has never been well painted; I mean the final departure of Regulus from Rome. Don't you think it would make a fine picture?" Mr. West answered, undoubtedly it was a magnificent subject. "Then," added his majesty, "you shall paint it for me."

Having ordered an attendant to bring the volume of Livy, the king observed to the queen with pleasing animation of manner, that the archbishop had made one of his sons read to Mr. West; but, said he, "I will read to him myself the subject of my picture." His majesty then read the relation of the event, and ordered the artist to produce a sketch as soon as possible.

This circumstance could not fail to afford the archbishop the highest gratification; and the royal patronage which the artist afterwards enjoyed, and the cultivation and encouragement of the arts in subsequent years, fully



justified his grace's expectations and endeavours.

Among the series of incidents which contributed to the success of the artist, may be noticed the particular interest which arose from the amusement of skating. To this the youth of Philadelphia were exceedingly partial, and performed it with uncommon dexterity. Being one day in St. James's-park, the curiosity of West was excited by the appearance of a number of persons on the canal. Fond of the exercise, he hired a pair of skates, and proceeded to amuse himself on the ice amidst the motley concourse. As he was retiring, a gentleman accosted him, "I perceive, sir, you are a stranger, and do not perhaps know that there are much better places than this for the exercise of skating. The Serpentine river in Hyde-park is far superior, and the basin in Kensington-gardens still more preferable. Here only the populace assemble; on the Serpentine, the company, although better, is also promiscuous; but the persons who frequent the basin in the gardens, are generally of the rank of gentlemen, and you will be less annoyed among them than at either of the other two places." On the following day, having purchased a pair of skates, Mr. West visited Kensington-gardens. While skating in his usual style, as practised in America, a gentleman called him by name, and he instantly recognised his old acquaintance, colonel

Howe, who on coming to him said, "Mr. West, I am truly glad to see you in this country, and at this time. I have not heard of you since we parted on the wharf at Philadelphia, when you sailed for Italy; but I have often since had occasion to recollect you. I am, therefore, particularly glad to see you here, and on the ice; for you must know, that in speaking of the American skaters it has been alleged that I have learnt to draw the long bow among them; but you are come in a lucky moment to vindicate my veracity."

The colonel then introduced Mr. West, as one of the American skaters, to lord Spencer Hamilton and the Cavendishes. Thus an acquaintance was formed between the artist and these young noblemen. Having witnessed his skating, in which, agreeably to the request of colonel Howe, he had performed, with admirable dexterity and grace, what is termed in Philadelphia the salute, they spoke of him in such terms of applause in all their customary resorts, that in a few days after, thousands, among whom were crowds of fashionables, thronged to see the novel attraction of an American skater. And it no sooner became known that he was an artist, than many who had witnessed his exploits on the ice, applied to him for the display of his professional skill. By this simple incident he gained more encour-

agement as a portrait-painter than he could have anticipated by any ordinary means.

While engaged in painting the *Regulus*, Mr. West was frequently invited to Buckingham-house, where he spent many agreeable evenings. Such was the interest which his majesty, who possessed a considerable share of literary information, evinced in the conversations which took place, that he often detained the artist till eleven o'clock. Though the king had employed Mr. West in a private capacity, yet he manifested a great desire for the cultivation of the fine arts in the kingdom, as interesting the public attention. When therefore the division took place in the society of the incorporated artists, his majesty patronised that institution which was styled the Royal Academy, and honoured it with his warmest approbation and his constant support.

Some dissensions having arisen in the incorporated society, West and others separated; and the very morning on which the artist took the sketch of *Regulus* to his majesty, the newspapers contained statements of the facts. On the inquiry of the king, Mr. West stated the cause of the unpleasantness, adding that the principles of his religion taught him to regard such proceedings of animosity as degrading to the professors of the arts of peace. His majesty replied, that he should readily patronise an association which might be estab-



lished more directly to promote the prosperity of the arts.

West having stated this circumstance to Chambers, Moser, and Coats, they agreed to form themselves into a committee of the dissenting artists, and afterwards formed a plan for an academy. His majesty so highly approved of the proceeding, that he drew up several laws with his own hand. He was anxious that the whole should be preserved a profound secret, lest it might be construed into some political perversion.

The artists who had separated themselves, held a meeting at Wilton's. The different officers were appointed according to the nomination of his majesty, and the code of laws was read and accepted. Reynolds was declared president; Chambers, treasurer; Newton, secretary; Moser, keeper; Penny, professor of painting; Wall, professor of perspective; and Dr. William Hunter, professor of anatomy. The proceedings received the royal approbation; and thus, on the 10th of Dec. 1768, this institution was formed for the promotion of the arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture, under the title of the Royal Academy of Arts.

The *Regulus* was exhibited at the Royal Academy; and such was the approbation expressed, that his majesty was pleased to afford Mr. West further encouragement. The artist

was therefore engaged to paint another interesting subject of history: Hamilcar making his son Hannibal swear implacable enmity against the Romans.

This picture obtained his majesty's most cordial approbation; he viewed it with extraordinary interest and satisfaction, and afterwards expressed to Mr. West his idea of ordering subjects to fill the different pannels of the room that remained unoccupied.

About this time, the artist completed his painting of the Death of Wolfe. This performance excited no inconsiderable interest. Curiosity and criticism were on the alert. Its general merits were acknowledged with admiration, but various remarks were made concerning the novelty apparent in the representation of the characters in modern uniforms. The king informed Mr. West that he had heard many observations respecting the picture, but he understood that it failed in dignity, in consequence of the novel deviation from the customary rules of art, as already stated; adding, that it was deemed ridiculous to exhibit heroes in coats, breeches, and cocked hats. Mr. West then took the opportunity to relate to the king the following anecdote, to which he begged his majesty's attention, as it alluded to the specific point of objection. "When it was understood," said he, "that I intended to paint the characters

as they had actually appeared in the scene, the archbishop of York called on Reynolds and asked his opinion; the result of which was, that they came together to my house. His grace was apprehensive that by persevering in my intention, I might lose some portion of the reputation which he was pleased to think I had acquired by his picture of Agrippina, and your majesty's of Regulus; and he was anxious to avert the misfortune by his friendly interposition. He informed me of the object of their visit, and that Reynolds wished to dissuade me from running so great a risk. I could not but feel highly gratified by so much solicitude, and acknowledged myself ready to attend to whatever Reynolds had to say, and even to adopt his advice, if it appeared to me founded in any proper principles. Reynolds then began a very ingenious and elegant dissertation on the state of the public taste in this country, and the danger which every attempt at innovation necessarily incurred of repulse or ridicule; and concluded with urging me to adopt the classic costume of antiquity as much more becoming the inherent greatness of my subject than the modern garb of war. I listened to him with the utmost attention in my power to give, but could perceive no principle in what he had delivered; only a strain of persuasion to induce me to comply with an existing prejudice—a prejudice which



I thought could not be too soon removed. When he had finished his discourse, I begged him to hear what I had to state in reply, and I began by remarking, that the event intended to be commemorated, took place on the 13th of September, in a region of the world unknown to the Greeks and Romans, and at a period of time when no such nations, nor heroes in their costume, any longer existed. The subject I have to represent is the conquest of a great province of America by the British troops. It is a topic that history will proudly record; and the same truth that guides the pen of the historian, should govern the pencil of the artist. I consider myself as undertaking to tell this great event to the eye of the world; but if, instead of the facts of the transaction, I represent classical fictions, how shall I be understood by posterity? The only reason for adopting the Greek and Roman dresses is the picturesque forms of which their drapery is susceptible; but is this an advantage for which all the truth and propriety of the subject should be sacrificed? I want to mark the date, the place, and the parties engaged in the event; and if I am not able to dispose of the circumstances in a picturesque manner, no academical distribution of Greek or Roman costume will enable me to do justice to the subject. However, without insisting upon principles to which I intend

to adhere, I feel myself so profoundly impressed with the friendship of this interference, that when the picture is finished, if you do not approve of it, I will consign it to the closet, whatever may be my own opinion of the execution." They soon after took their leave; and in due time I called on the archbishop, and fixed a day with him to come with Reynolds to see the painting. They came accordingly; and the latter, without speaking, after his first cursory glance, seated himself before the picture, and examined it with deep and minute attention for about half an hour. He then rose, and said to his Grace, "Mr. West has conquered. He has treated his subject as it ought to be treated. I retract my objections against the introduction of any other circumstances into historical pictures, than those which are requisite and appropriate: and I foresee that this picture will not only become one of the most popular, but occasion a revolution in the art."

Lord Grosvenor having obtained this painting, his majesty immediately ordered a copy for himself, together with the Death of Epaminondas, which, with Grecian circumstances, formed an appropriate contrast. In addition to these, his majesty ordered the picture of Cyrus liberating the family of the king of Armenia; and another representing Segestus and his daughter brought before Germanicus.

While engaged with these works, Mr. West had frequent interviews with the king, who always felt an interest in conversing on the subject of the arts, and testified an ardent desire for their extensive cultivation.

On one of these occasions, his majesty formed the intention to adorn Windsor Castle with the historical representations of events in the reign of Edward the Third. During the execution of these interesting works, the king expressed his wish for a pictorial illustration of revealed religion; and in the course of various conversations with Mr. West, designed the erection of a private chapel, in the Horn's Court of Windsor Castle. Though from the liberal and enlightened spirit of the age, he could apprehend but little unfavourable to the introduction of such pictures into places of worship, yet ever most exemplary and conscientious in his regard to religious principle, his majesty submitted his plan to the consideration of some eminent bishops, in whom he placed confidence. Mr. West, agreeably to the king's desire, drew up a series of subjects from the scriptures, which might represent the important scenes of the Four Dispensations in such a manner as the most scrupulous of any sect or denomination would not justly consider offensive to their particular sentiments. A day was fixed by his majesty to discuss the propriety of the proceeding. Dr.



Hurd, afterwards bishop of Worcester, Dr. Douglas, bishop of Salisbury, the dean of Windsor, and several other dignitaries, were present. The artist, whom his majesty had also invited, may be naturally supposed to feel a lively interest in the discussion. The king frankly stated his views, at the same time observing, that he should consider it the greatest glory of his reign to have the churches of Britain adorned with the instructive sublimities of the arts of peace. "But when I reflect," said his majesty, "how the ornaments of art were condemned at the Reformation, and still more recently in the unhappy times of Charles the First, I am anxious to govern my own wishes not only by what is right, but by what is prudent, in this matter. If it is conceived that I am tacitly bound, as head of the Church of England, to prevent any such ornaments from being introduced into places of worship; or if it be considered as at all savouring in any degree of a popish practice, how decidedly I may myself think it innocent, I will proceed no farther in the business; but, if the church may be adorned with pictures, illustrative of great events in the history of religion, as the Bible itself often is with engravings, I will gladly proceed with the execution of this design."

Having thus, with humility and candour worthy the character of a truly Christian mo-

narch, expressed his sentiments, his majesty requested the divines to consider the matter; and, giving them a list of the thirty-five subjects, which he had chosen for the intended chapel, he appointed a day to receive their reply.

On the day specified, the dignitaries again waited on his majesty; when Mr. West had the gratification to hear their decision in favour of the proposed sublime undertaking. Dr. Hurd reported the result of their investigation; stating that they had most seriously considered the business which his majesty had committed to their opinion, and, after most mature deliberation, had conscientiously decided, that the introduction of pictures into the chapel which the king had designed to erect, could not by any means be the least violation of the established regulations of the Church of England; and having, attentively examined the list of subjects selected from the Bible, they were of opinion that there was not one of them, which, if properly treated, even a Quaker might not contemplate with edification.

This observation, inadvertently delivered in the presence of Mr. West, attracted the king's notice; when his majesty instantly observed, that the Quakers were a body of Christians for whom he entertained the very highest respect, and that he thought, but for the obligations of his birth, he should himself have

been a Quaker; and he particularly expatiated on their peaceful demeanour, and mutual benevolence.

Immediately after this decision, Mr. West received orders to make designs from the list of subjects. The architectural plan of the chapel was afterwards formed by the assistance of Mr. West, with the king himself. The project was magnificent—becoming the sacred dignity of the royal character, and the exertions of that unparalleled genius which was thus directed to enrich Britain with the most splendid treasures of art ever beheld.

The chapel was to be ninety feet in length, by fifty in breadth. When the artist had made some advancement in the paintings, Mr. Wyatt, who had succeeded Sir William Chambers as the royal architect, was ordered to execute the plan: and it was designed that the grand flight of steps in the great staircase, should lead to a door opening into the royal closet, in the chapel of Revealed Religion.

The pictures for Windsor Castle cost the artist many hours of intense application and research, in order to maintain what he deemed so highly essential—namely, historical truth. The late marquis of Buckingham offered some suggestion in the composition for the institution of the Garter; and observing to his majesty, that Mr. West was a descendant of the Delawarre family, the king ordered the artist



to insert his own portrait among the spectators in the gallery, and directly over the shield bearing the arms of the earl of Delawarre. Mr. West was not at that time acquainted with his pedigree, but lord Buckingham, inquiring one day from what part of England Mr. West's family had been originally, his lordship said that the land formerly in possession of his ancestors was become his by purchase, and that the Wests of Long Cranndon were descendants of the ancient earls of Delawarre.

On the death of sir Joshua Reynolds in 1791, Mr. West was unanimously elected president of the Royal Academy. He filled the important office with ability and zeal: and in his annual lectures communicated the most valuable instruction on the essential principles of the arts; displaying on every occasion a rich fund of knowledge, sound judgment, and transcendent accomplishment in his profession. On the 24th of March, 1792, his election received the sanction of the king; when Mr. West delivered the following address to the academicians:—

“ Gentlemen,

“ The free and unsolicited choice with which you have called me to fill this chair, vacated by the death of that great character sir Joshua Reynolds, is so marked an instance of your friendship and good opinion, that it

demands the immediate acknowledgment of my thanks, which I beg you to accept.

“ I feel more sensibly the dignity to which you have raised me, as I am placed in succession after so eminent a character, whose exalted professional abilities, and very excellent discourses delivered under this roof, have secured a lasting honour to this institution, and to the country; while his amiable dispositions, as a man, will make his loss to be long regretted by all who had the happiness to know him.

“ His majesty having been graciously pleased to approve and confirm the choice which you have made of me as your president, it becomes my duty, as far as my humble abilities will permit, to study and pursue whatever may be the true interest, the prosperity, and the glory of this academy. In the prosecution of this duty, I can make no doubt of success, when I reflect, that all the departments and classes of this institution are filled with men of established professional reputation, selected from professors of the three great branches of art, which constitute the objects of your studies; and when I see this union of abilities strengthened by many ingenious productions of other able artists, who, although they have not as yet the honour of belonging to this body, will, nevertheless, enable us to maintain the accustomed brilliancy of our ex-

hibitions; and, consequently, to secure to us the approbation of a liberal and judicious public.

“The exhibitions are of the greatest importance to this institution; and the institution is become of great importance to the country. Here ingenious youth are instructed in the art of design; and the instruction acquired in this place, has spread itself through the various manufactures of this country, to which it has given a taste that is able to convert the most common and simple materials into rare and valuable articles of commerce. Those articles the British merchant sends forth into all the quarters of the world, where they stand pre-eminent over the productions of other nations.

“But, important as this is, there is another consequence of a more exalted kind; I mean, the cultivating of those higher excellences in refined art, which have never failed to secure to nations, and to the individuals who have nourished them, an immortality of fame, which no other circumstances have been equally able to perpetuate.

“For it is by those higher and more refined excellences of painting, sculpture, and architecture, that Grecian and Roman greatness are transmitted down to the age in which we live, as if it was still in existence. Many centuries have elapsed since Greeks and Ro-



mans have been overthrown and dissolved as a people; but other nations, by whom similar refinements were not cultivated, are erased from the face of the earth, without leaving any monument, or vestige, to give the demonstration that they were ever great.

“It may, therefore, be fairly assumed, that an academy, whose objects and effects are so enlightened and extensive as those which are prosecuted here, is highly worthy of the protection of a patriot king, of a dignified nobility, and of a wise people.

“Another circumstance, permit me, gentlemen, to mention, because I can speak of it with peculiar satisfaction, as important to the best interests of the institution, and with the fullest assurance of its truth, from the personal knowledge I have had of you all, and the intimacy in which I have stood with most of you; it is this, that I have ever found you steadily determined to support the regulations under which this academy has been governed, and brought to its present conspicuous situation, and by an attention to which, we shall always be sure to go on with the greatest prudence and advantage.

“It is a matter of no less satisfaction to me, when I say, that I have always observed your bosoms to glow with gratitude and loyal affection towards our august founder, patron, and benefactor. I am convinced it is your wish

to retain his friendship, and the friendship of every branch of his illustrious family. I know these to be your sentiments, and they are sentiments in which I participate with you. In every situation of my life, it shall be my invariable study to demonstrate my duty to my sovereign, my love for this institution, and my zeal for the cultivation of genius, and the growth of universal virtue."

The professions here made were fully exemplified in the subsequent conduct of the president, whose talent and industry were perseveringly directed to those great interests of intellectual and moral improvement for which he avowed so laudable a solicitude.

During the peace of Amiens, Mr. West visited France; and carrying with him letters from lord Hawkesbury, then secretary of state, and from Monsieur Otto, the French minister in London, he was introduced to the most distinguished members of the French government, who manifested great attention and liberality; with whom being invited successively to dine, he had the honour of associating in the first circles in France. Every facility was afforded him, and he inspected, with care and gratification, the rich display of paintings and sculptures which adorned the Louvre. During his stay in France, he learnt that the French government had formed most

magnificent schemes for the encouragement and prosperity of the arts. Mr. Fox and sir Francis Baring, who were then at Paris, called on West, when the artist embraced the opportunity to introduce the subject. Visiting the Louvre, West endeavoured to illustrate the usefulness of the arts in a commercial point of view, and regretted that the British government had not adopted some decided measure for their cultivation. An interesting conversation took place, and such was the impression on the mind of Mr. Fox, that he expressed a determination to exert his influence in furtherance of so desirable a cause.

When Mr. West returned to England, sir Francis Baring, sir Thomas Barnard, Mr. Charles Long, and sir Abraham Hume, particularly interested themselves in the subject; and a meeting was held at Mr. West's house. These endeavours subsequently led to the establishment of the British Institution in Pall Mall.

In promotion of the design suggested in France, Mr. Pitt, then in power, having been consulted, felt disposed to lend his influence; but his death occurring after a series of anxious labours which absorbed his whole attention, the project received no immediate assistance from government.

When Mr. Fox came into office, he manifested his desire to realize the purpose which



had been suggested. But his death transpired before any opportunity had been afforded him to pursue the object, in which he professed so laudable an interest.

Mr. Percival, also, after having been convinced of the utility of the fine arts, and their important relation to commercial interests, evinced his intention to countenance the proposal, and to submit it to the Prince Regent. But in a few days Mr. Percival was assassinated;—and since then no farther steps have been taken.

While noticing the procedures connected with the establishment of the British institution, it may be proper to state an interesting fact relative to that transcendent work:—Christ healing the Sick, which has so much contributed to its interests.

Some gentlemen of the society of Quakers, at Philadelphia, having opened a subscription with a view to erect a hospital, applied to Mr. West, among others in this country, to contribute to that cause of Christian benevolence. Mr. West informed them that as his circumstances did not admit of his giving so liberally as he could wish, he would paint a picture for the building;—expressing his hope that it might prove more advantageous than such pecuniary contribution as he could afford. He therefore began the Christ healing the Sick. This

performance excited so much interest, that the British Institution gave him three thousand guineas for it;—at the same time the artist was permitted as an essential condition of the purchase, to take a copy of the picture for the hospital at Philadelphia. This picture, during its exhibition in Pall Mall, produced no less a sum than thirteen thousand pounds. Mr. West made several additions to the copy which he sent to America, where it was attended with extraordinary success. Eighteen hundred guineas were expended in erecting a suitable building for its exhibition; and in the space of two years the profits not only exceeded that expenditure, but were sufficient to enable the committee to enlarge the hospital for the admission of thirty patients in addition to the original number.

While preparing the series of historical paintings for Windsor Castle, Mr. West was honoured with the offer of knighthood. The late duke of Gloucester, having, by his majesty's request, called on him for that purpose, Mr. West replied that no man had greater respect for such honours; but he considered that his pencil had earned him greater eminence and distinction than rank of that nature;—observing, “the chief value of titles are, that they serve to preserve in families a respect for those principles by which such distinctions were originally obtained. But

simple knighthood to a man who is at least already as well known as he could ever hope to be, from that honour, is not a legitimate object of my ambition. To myself then, your royal highness must perceive, the title could add no dignity, and as it would perish with myself, it could add none to my family. But were I possessed of a fortune, independent of my profession, sufficient to enable my posterity to maintain the rank, I think that with my hereditary descent, and the station I occupy among artists, a more permanent title than that of knighthood might become a desirable object. As it is, however, that cannot be, and I have been thus explicit with your royal highness that no misconception may exist on the subject." Pleased with this reply, the duke immediately took Mr. West by both the hands, and said, " You have justified the opinion which the king has of you, and his majesty will be delighted with your answer."

The next interview which Mr. West had with the king was marked with unusual friendliness.

But, after so extended a series of interesting and pleasing circumstances, which really, in their propitious concurrence in advancing an individual to honourable distinction, with so large a share of attendant felicity in every connexion, in every undertaking, in every sphere, are scarcely paralleled, the artist was destined to participate in the adverse mutability of



human affairs. It has been asserted that the king was displeased in consequence of the honourable receptions which attended Mr. West's visits among the French artists and other eminent men while at Paris; and that on that account he was suspended from the President's chair. This is, however, altogether erroneous; for his resignation of the chair was owing entirely to cabals in the academy; and his majesty, so far from being displeased, was particularly gratified not only on hearing from Mr. West himself of his intended visit to Paris, but of the distinguished honours which were paid to the artist during his residence in that capital, and increased rather than diminished his testimonies of most firm and decided friendship towards Mr. West.

These transactions excited considerable interest in the public mind: but the result was not so serious to Mr. West as the procedure adopted during his majesty's indisposition.

For more than twenty years the king had personally given to Mr. West every order relative to the pictures. The whole of the subjects, and their respective prices, were arranged with his majesty.

In the summer of 1801, however, when the court was at Weymouth, Mr. Wyatt, calling on Mr. West, informed him, that the paintings for his majesty's chapel at Windsor should be suspended till further orders.

Mr. West, greatly surprised, interrogated

Mr. Wyatt as to his authority, when he ascertained that the king was not aware of the order;—and he subsequently learnt that it was given by the queen, in the presence of the late earl of Rosslyn.

The occurrence deeply affected Mr. West, as it threatened to deprive him of that provision for the decline of life which he had so honourably merited, and so laudably earned, while it would render useless the most dignified labours of his art. Reflecting, however, on the long and faithful friendship which he had enjoyed with his majesty, he drew up the following letter:—

*“ To the King’s Most Excellent Majesty.*

*“ Newman-street, 26 ———, 1801.*

*“ Gracious Sire,*

*“ On the fifteenth of last month Mr. Wyatt signified to me your majesty’s pleasure, that the pictures by me now painting for his majesty’s chapel at Windsor, should be suspended until farther orders. I feel it a duty I owe to that communication, to lay before your majesty, by the return of Mr. Wyatt to Weymouth, a statement of those pictures which I have painted to add to those for the chapel, mentioned in the account I had the honour to transmit to your majesty in 1797, by the hands of Mr. Gabriel Matthias. Since that period I have finished three pictures, begun several others, and composed the remainder*

of the subjects for the chapel, on the progress of Revealed Religion, from its commencement to its completion; and the whole arranged with that circumspection, from the Four Dispensations, into five-and-thirty compositions, that the most scrupulous amongst the various religious sects in this country, about admitting pictures into churches, must acknowledge them as truths, or the Scriptures fabulous. These are subjects so replete with dignity, character, and expression, as demanded the historian, the commentator, and the accomplished painter to bring them into view. Your majesty's gracious complacency and commands for my pencil on that extensive subject, stimulated my humble abilities, and I commenced the work with zeal and enthusiasm. Animated by your commands, gracious sire, I renewed my professional studies, and burnt my midnight lamp to attain and give that polish at the close of your majesty's chapel, which has since marked my subsequent scriptural pictures. Your majesty's known zeal for promoting religion and the elegant arts had enrolled your virtue with all the civilized world; and your gracious protection of my pencil had given to it a celebrity throughout Europe, and opened a knowledge of the great work of Revealed Religion, which my pencil was engaged on under your majesty's patronage: it is that work to which all Christendom looks with complacency for its completion.



“Being distinguished by your majesty’s benignity at an early period as a painter, and chosen by those professors highly endowed in the three branches of the fine arts to fill their highest station, and sanctioned by your majesty’s signature in their choice: in that station I have been, for more than ten years, zealous in promoting merit in those three branches of art, which constitute the views of your majesty’s establishment for cultivating their growth. The ingenious artists have received my professional aid, and my galleries and my purse have been open to their studies and their distresses. The breath of envy, nor the whisper of detraction, never defiled my lips, nor the want of morality my character; and, through life, a strict adherer to truth;—a zealous admirer of your majesty’s virtues and goodness of heart, the exalted virtues of her majesty the queen, and the high accomplishments of others of your majesty’s illustrious family, have been the theme of my delight; and their gracious complacency my greatest pleasure and consolation for many years, with which I was honoured with many instances of friendly notice, and their warm attachment to the fine arts.

“With these feelings of high sensibility, with which my heart has ever been inspired, I feel with great concern the suspension given by Mr. Wyatt to the work on Revealed Religion,

my pencil had advanced to adorn Windsor Castle. If, gracious sire, this suspension is meant to be permanent, myself and the fine arts have to lament. For to me it will be ruinous, and to the energetic artist, in the highest branches of his professional pursuits,—a damp in the hope of more exalted minds, of patronage in the refined departments of painting. But I have this in store, for the grateful feeling of my heart, that, in the thirty-five years by which my pencil has been honoured by your majesty's commands, a great body of historical compositions will be found in your majesty's possession, in the churches, and in the country. Their professional claims may be humble, but they have been produced by a loyal subject of your majesty, which may give them some claim to respect, similar works not having been attained before in this country by a subject; and this I shall assert as my claim, that your majesty did not bestow your patronage and commands on an ungrateful and lazy man, but on him who had a high sense of your majesty's honour and your majesty's interests in all cases, as a dutiful and loyal subject, as well as servant, to your majesty's gracious commands; and I humbly beg your majesty to be assured that

“ I am,

“ With profound duty,

“ Your majesty's grateful

“ BENJAMIN WEST.”

When the court returned to Windsor, Mr. West had a private audience with the king, and found that his majesty neither knew any thing of the circumstance in question, nor had received Mr. West's letter. Officious interference somewhere existed which could wantonly sport with venerable merit, could treat with indifference the friendship of one of the best of kings, and, as if absorbed in the ignorance of barbarous nations in remotest climes, could aim a fatal blow against those stupendous works which must have ranked among the brightest and most exalted glories of British fame. The recent suspension was as great a surprise and as great a grief to the king, as it was to Mr. West, for whom he still manifested an inviolable regard. Having conversed on the mystery, his majesty said, "Go on with your work, West; go on with the pictures, and I will take care of you." Accordingly Mr. West continued his labours, and received the customary payments as previously arranged. But, at the period of his majesty's final superannuation, Mr. West, on calling to receive the quarterly sum, was told that it had been stopped, and the intended design of the chapel suspended. Having received no intimation of the circumstance, Mr. West was naturally surprised; and it certainly was a trial of no ordinary solicitude. It appears that a paper had been circulated in the higher circles specifying



the amount of money which Mr. West had received from the king. But, whoever was the author of this disingenuous artifice, it ought to be observed that the length of time, the magnitude of the works, and the exclusive preference which the painter gave to his majesty's orders, are not even intimated. The aggregate sum is stated without any reference to other considerations. In order, therefore, to do justice to the memory of so worthy and eminent a character, whose life exhibited a scene of moral excellence blended with exemplary usefulness, the account as kept by Mr. West has been given to the public. And here it may not be deemed improper to remark, that the thousand a-year, though when viewed in the total sum it may appear very considerable, yet was not, in reality, an adequate remuneration. It is far inferior to what Mr. West might have realized; even portrait-painters of eminence have obtained by their profession from three to five thousand a-year. As, therefore, the engagement for the Windsor chapel terminated, Mr. West sustained very great loss; but the loss, though certainly felt in the period of his old age, when he ought to have enjoyed solace and rest, did not affect him so much as the failure of that exalted design, which would have concentrated the noblest productions of many years' labour, and have contributed to the honour of the arts, while it

must have conveyed to the latest posterity monuments of greatness superior to any of which the present age can boast.

However, he soon manifested his usual equanimity; and without pursuing any measures for the payment of the quarterly allowance, he formed the intention to appeal to the liberality of the public. With this view he painted several large pictures, among which were, the Christ rejected, and Death on the Pale Horse. These were exhibited to the public, by whom their transcendent merits were highly appreciated, and the artist was deservedly rewarded.

A gentleman seeing the picture of Christ rejected, before it was quite finished, offered to purchase it for the sum of ten thousand pounds. Mr. West, on hearing his proposal, inquired if he were really serious on the subject, when the gentleman assured him that he positively wished to purchase it, and would readily pay that sum. On another occasion the artist was offered seven thousand pounds, and the profits of the first year's exhibition. Fortunately, however, he declined both offers; and by exhibiting on his own account this picture, with Death on the Pale Horse, the remuneration far exceeded his expectations—two hundred and forty thousand persons having visited the exhibition.

On the 6th Dec. 1814, he suffered an irreparable bereavement in the death of Mrs. West.

She was indeed a woman of many excellent and exalted qualities, and, after a marriage of more than half a century, though a long illness had in some measure prepared the mind of her husband for the event, it was a loss which he could not but feel with unusual emotions of sorrow.

At length the period arrived, when this great and good man was visited by the solemn intimations of his approaching end. His illness was not severe. It was rather like a subservient messenger, dispatched by the clemency of heaven, to apprise the venerable Christian of the last great change, and animating him with the prospect of a blissful departure to another and a better world. His intellectual powers displayed their living energies to the last moment; nature gradually decayed, without any severe attack of affliction, and calmly expired. Mr. West died at his house, in Newman-street, on the 10th of March, 1820, and was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral, with the most distinguished marks of respect and esteem: his funeral being, perhaps, one of the most magnificent solemnities ever observed on the interment of a private individual. Characters of the highest rank and distinction, as well, indeed, as all classes, were anxious to pay their last tribute of respect to this eminent man.

In the character of Mr. West we contem-



plate a rich and impressive assemblage of Christian virtues : a character never sullied by the least imputation of immorality, but which maintained its purity and dignity through a long and useful life, admired and beloved by all who had the felicity of his acquaintance. Integrity and truth, humility and benevolence, the predominant characteristics of practical Christianity, shone in the whole of his deportment with their hallowed simplicity and beauty. His word was sacred : his heart was uprightness and charity. The indigent shared his beneficence. His purse, as well as his professional abilities, was devoted frequently to the assistance of necessitous artists. His manners were mild and unassuming ; he was ambitious only of moral goodness, and of useful labours. In him was recognised the faithful, social friend. He was uniformly temperate, prudent, and judicious. In addition to his professional acquirements, he possessed an extensive share of general knowledge. He was intelligent, methodical, and deliberate in his reflections. That happy union of serenity and vivacity which shone in his eye may be said to have been the transparency of his genius, possessing easy composure, in harmony with discriminating care. Of his unprecedented industry, his works are perpetual demonstrations. Their properties are an association of the chief excellences apparent in

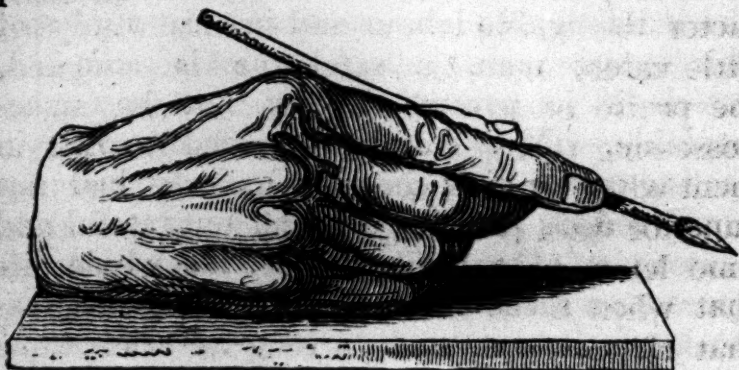
the productions of the greatest geniuses of antiquity, without any of their defects; and at the same time they exhibit a perfection of original and inventive talent before unknown. Character and expression are the grand objects of the artist. In these Mr. West has obtained pre-eminence. The character is marked with a precision, as if inspired with supernatural discernment. In the countenance is seen the very soul.

The number of his works is astonishing. That the reader may form some estimate of the indefatigable labour and intense study of this great man, a catalogue is annexed, which it is presumed may not be unacceptable. Mr. West was indeed correct in stating to the king that his majesty had not conferred his patronage on an ungrateful and lazy man. On the contrary, his whole life presents a scene of active goodness and persevering industry; and as long as science, or art, or virtue shall exist, the name of Benjamin West will stand pre-eminent in honourable fame.

In concluding this memoir, it may not be deemed inappropriate to mention the following impressive incident.

In the solemn moments of death, which so eminent a Christian estimates as a prelude to immortality, Mr. West exemplified that serene tranquillity of spirit, and that devout resigna-

tion, which conscious piety alone can inspire. Evidently engaged in sublime contemplations, with which he had indeed long been familiar, his exalted genius still evinced its native force: and the position of his hand affectingly interested the attention of all present. The annexed cast was taken by Mr. Behnes a few hours after the artist's decease. Whatever were his views at the solemn period of his dissolution, it is obvious, that to express his thoughts by the pencil was his prevailing disposition.



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The following discourse, addressed to the students of the Royal Academy, is so interesting and instructive, that no apology is necessary for its introduction here.

“The few points upon which I mean to touch in the present discourse, are those which more immediately apply to the students who are



generously striving to attain excellence in the first class of refined art—historical painting.

“Whether their exertions are directed to painting, or the sister arts, architecture and sculpture, the first thing they must impress upon their minds, and engraft upon every shoot of their fancy, is that of the appropriate character by which the subject they are about to treat is distinguished from all other subjects. On this foundation all the points of refined art which are, in the truest sense, intellectual, invariably rest; for without justness of character the works of the pencil can have but little value, and can never entitle the artist to the praise of a well-governed genius, or of possessing that philosophical precision of judgment which is the source of excellence in the superior walk of his profession. At the same time let it be indelibly fixed in your minds, that when decided character is to be given, that character must be accompanied by correctness of outline, whether it be in painting or sculpture. Any representation of the human figure, in the higher department of art, wanting these requisites, is to the feelings of the educated artist deficient in that, for the loss of which no other excellency can compensate.

“Architecture.—This department of art received its decided character from the Greeks. They distinctly fixed the embellishments to the several orders; and, by their adaptation of

these embellishments and orders, their buildings obtained a distinct and appropriate character, which declared the uses for which they were erected.

“The Romans, in their best era of taste, copied their Grecian instructors in that appropriate character of embellishment which explained at a glance the use of their respective buildings: but in their latter ages they declined from this original purity; and it is the fragments of that corruption, in which they lost the characteristic precision of the Greeks, that we have seen of late years employed upon many of our buildings. The want of mental reflection in employing the orders of architecture, with a rational precision as to character, produces the same sort of deficiency which we find in an historical picture; where, although each figure, in correct proportion, be well drawn, with drapery, elegantly folded yet, not being employed appropriately to the subject, affords no satisfaction to the spectator.

“The Greeks were in architecture what they were in sculpture; and it is to them you must look for the original purity of both. We feel rejoiced, that the exertions recently made by a noble personage to enrich our studies in both of these departments of art are such, that we may say London has become the Athens for study. It is the mental power displayed in the Elgin marbles, that I wish the juvenile

artist to notice. Look at the equestrian groups of the young Athenians in this collection, and you will find in them that momentary motion, which life gives on the occasion to the riders and their horses. The horse we perceive feels that power which the impulse of life has given to his rider; we see in him the animation of his whole frame; in the fire of his eyes, the distention of his nostrils, and in the rapid motion of his feet, yielding to the guidance of his rider, or in the speeding of his course: they are, therefore, in perfect unison with the life in each. At this moment of their animation they appear to have been turned into stone by some majestic power, and not created by the human hand. The single head of the horse, in the same collection, seems as if it had, by the same influence, been struck into marble, when he was exerting all the energy of his motion.

“These admirable sculptures, which now adorn our city, are the union of Athenian genius and philosophy, and illustrate my meaning respecting the mental impression which is so essentially to be given to works of refined art. It was this point which the Grecian philosophers wished to impress on the minds of their sculptors, not to follow their predecessors the Egyptians in sculpture, who represented their figures without motion, although nearly perfect in giving to them the external form ‘It is the passions,’ said they, ‘with



which man is endowed, that we wish to see in the movements of your figures.' This advice of the philosophers was felt by the sculptors, and the Athenian marbles are the faithful records of the efficacy of that advice.

"That you may distinctly perceive and invariably distinguish what we mean by appropriate character in art, particularly in sculpture, I would class with these sculptures the Hercules, the Apollo, the Venus, the Laocoon, and the Gladiator. In these examples you will find what is appropriate in character to subject, united with correctness of outline; and it is this combination of truths which has arrested the attention of an admiring world, ever since they were produced; and which will attract to them the admiration of after-ages, so long as the workings of the mind on the external form can be contemplated and understood.

"Now let us see what works there are since the revival of art in the modern world, which rest on the same basis of appropriate character and correctness of outline, with those of the ancient Greeks.

"The Moses which the powers of Michael Angelo's mind has presented to our view, claims our first attention. In this statue the points of character, in every mode of precise, determinate, and elevated expression, have been carried to a pitch of grandeur which modern art has not since excelled. In this figure of

Moses, Michael Angelo has fixed the unalterable standard of the Jewish lawgiver,—a character delineated and justified by the text in inspired sculpture. The character of Moses was well suited to the grandeur of the artist's conceptions, and to the dreadful energy of his feelings. Accordingly, in mental character, this figure holds the first station in modern art; and I believe we may venture to say, had no competitor in ancient, except those of the Jupiter and Minerva by Phidias. But the Saviour, all meekness and benevolence, which Michael Angelo made to accompany the Moses, was not in unison with his genius. The figure is mean, but slightly removed from an academical figure, and in no point appropriate to the subject: so are most of the single figures of the artist, in his great work on the Day of Judgment; but his groups in that composition are every where in character, and have not their rivals either in painting or sculpture. His Bacchus claims our admiration, as being appropriate to the subject, by the same excellence in delineation which distinguishes the groups in the Day of Judgment. No person can have a higher veneration than I have for that grandeur of character impressed on the figures by Michael Angelo; but it is the fitness of the characters and of the action to the subject, to which I wish to draw your attention, and not to pour out

praise on those points in which he and other eminent masters are deficient. On this occasion I must therefore be permitted to repeat, that most of the single figures in his great work of the Day of Judgment are deficient in the fitness of appropriate character, and in the fitness of appropriate action to the subject; although, as single figures, they demand our admiration. But excellent as they are, they are but the ingenious adaptation of legs, arms, and heads, to the celebrated Torso, which bears his name, and which served as the model to most of his figures. All figures in composition, however excellent they may be in delineation, which have not their actions and expressions springing from the subject in which they are the actors, can only be considered as academical efforts, without the impress of mental power, and without any philosophical attention to the truth of the subject which the artist intended to illustrate.

“Leonardo da Vinci is the first who had a full and right conception of the principle which I wish to inculcate, and he has shewn it in his picture of the Last Supper. But it is necessary to distinguish what parts of the picture deserve consideration. It is the decision, the appropriate character of the apostles to the subject; the significance of expression in their several countenances, and the diversity of action in each figure; their actions



seemingly in perfect unison with their minds, and their figures individually in unison with their respective situations; some are confused at the words spoken by our Saviour:— ‘There is one amongst you who shall betray me;’ others are thrown under impressions of a different feeling. In this respect the picture has left us without an appeal, either to nature or to art. But Da Vinci failed in the head of our Saviour. He has failed in his attempt to combine the almost incompatible qualities of dignity and meekness which are demanded in the countenance of the Saviour. He had exhausted his powers of characteristic discrimination in the heads of the apostles; and in his attempt to give meekness to the countenance of Jesus, he sank into insipience. He had the prudence, therefore, to leave the face unfinished, that the imagination of the beholder might not be disappointed by an imperfect image, but form one in his mind more appropriate to his feelings and to the subject. The ruin of this picture, the report of which I understand is true, has deprived the world and the arts of one of the mental eyes of painting. But pleasing as the works of Leonardo da Vinci are in general, had he not produced this picture of the Last Supper, and the Cartoon of the equestrian combatants for the standard of victory, he would scarcely have emerged, as a

painter of strong character, above mediocrity. Indeed the back-ground and general distribution of this picture sufficiently mark their Gothic origin. But his pictures, generally speaking, are more characterised by their laborious finishing, gentleness, and sweetness of character, than by the energies of a lively imagination.

“Fra. Bartolomeo di St. Marco, of Florence, was one of the first who became enamoured of that superiority which grandeur and decision of character gives to art; and indeed, of all those higher excellences which the philosophical mind of Da Vinci had accomplished. In the pictures of Bartolomeo we behold, for the first time, that breadth of the clair-obscur—the deep tone of colour, with their philosophical arrangement, united to that noble folding of drapery appropriate to, and significant of, every character it covered; a point of excellence in this master, from which Raphael caught his first conception of that noble simplicity which distinguishes the dignity of his draperies, and which it became his pride through life to imitate.

“Bartolomeo, in his figure of St. Mark, has convinced us how important and indispensable is the union of mental conception with truth of observation, in order to give a decided and appropriate character to an Evangelist of the Gospel. None of the pictures of this artist

possess the excellence of his St. Mark, except one, which is in the city of Lucca, the capital of the republic of that name; and, as that picture is but little known to travellers, and almost unknown to many artists who have visited Italy, a description of it may not be unacceptable.

“The picture is on pannel, and its dimensions somewhat about twenty feet in height by fourteen in width. The subject is the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. The composition is divided into three groups. The Apostles and the sepulchre form the centre group, from the midst of which the Virgin ascends. Her body-drapery is of a deep ruby colour, which is the only decided red in the picture; and her mantle blue, but in depth of tone approaching to black, and extended by angels to nearly each side of the picture. This mantle is relieved by a light, in tone resembling that of the break of day, seen over the summit of a dark mountain, which gives an awful grandeur to the effect of the picture on entering the chapel, in which it is placed over the altar. That awful light of the morning is contrasted with the golden effulgence above; in the midst of which our Saviour is seen with extended arms, to receive and welcome his mother.

“From the sepulchre and the Apostles in the centre, to the fore-ground, the third group of figures partly lies in shade, occasioned by



the over-shadowing of the Virgin's deep-toned mantle extended by angels. On the other part of the group, on the side where the light enters, the figures are seen in the broad blaze of day; and amongst them is the portrait of the artist.

"When I first saw this picture, my sensations were in unison with its awful character; and I confess I was touched with the same kind of sensibility as when I heard the inexpressibly harmonious blendings of vocal sounds in the solemn notes of *Non nobis Domine*. I never felt more forcibly the dignity of music, and the dignity of painting, than from these two compositions of art.

"When we consider the combination of excellence requisite to produce the sublime in painting—the union of propriety with dignity of character—the graceful grouping—the noble folding of drapery, and the deep sombrous tones of the clair-obscuré, with appropriate colours harmoniously blending into one whole;—if there is a picture entitled to the appellation of sublime, from the union of all these excellences, it is that which I have described. Considered in all its parts, it is, perhaps, superior to any work in painting which has fallen under my observation.

"When these powerful essays in art by Da Vinci, Bartolomeo di St. Marco, and Michael Angelo, became celebrated, Raphael

having attained his adult age, made his appearance at Florence; where the influence of the works of those three great artists pervaded all the avenues to excellence in art.

“The gentle sensibility of Raphael’s mind was like the softened wax which makes more visible and distinct the form of the engraving with which it is touched. Blest by nature with this endowment, he became like the heir to the treasured wealth of many families. Enriched by the accumulated experience which was then in Florence, united to the early tuition of delineating from nature under Pietro Perugino, and the subsequent discoveries of the Grecian relics, Raphael’s mind became stored with all that was excellent; and he possessed a practised hand, to make his conceptions visible on his tablets. Possessing these powers, he was invited to Rome, and began his picture of *The Dispute on the Sacrament*. This picture he finished, together with *The School of Athens*, before he had attained his twenty-eighth year. At Rome he found himself amidst the splendour of a refined court, and in the focus of human endowment. He became sensible of the rare advantages of his situation; he had industry and ardour to combine and to embrace them all; and the effect is visible in his works. The theological arrangement of the disputants on the sacrament, and the scholastic controversies at

Athens, convince us of this truth. In the upper part of the Dispute on the Sacrament, something may be observed of that taste of Bartolomeo in drapery, and of the dryness and hardness of his first master Pietro Perugino; but in the parts which make the aggregate of that work, he has blended the result of his own observations. In his School of Athens this is still more strikingly the case; and in his Heliodorus, we see additional dignity, and an enlargement of style.

“ At this period of his life, such was the desire of his society by the great, and such the ambition of standing forward amongst his patrons by all who were eminent for rank and taste, that he was seduced into courtly habits, and relaxed from that studious industry, with which he had formerly laboured; and there are evident marks in many of his works in the Vatican, of a decline of excellence, and that he was suffering pleasure and indolence to rob him of his fame. Sensible of this decline in his compositions, the powers of his mind reassumed their energies; and that re-animation stands marked in his unrivalled compositions of the Cartoons which are in this country, and in the picture of the Transfiguration.

“ The transcendant excellence in composition, and in appropriate character to subject, in the Cartoon of Paul preaching at Athens



has left us to desire or expect nothing farther to be done in telling this incident of history.

"In the composition of the death of Ananias, and in the single figure of Elymas the sorcerer struck blind, we have the same example of excellence. We have, indeed, in many of the characters and groups in the cartoons, the various modes of reasoning, speaking, and feeling; but so blended with nature and truth, and so precise and determined in character, that criticism has nothing wherewith in that respect to ask for amendment.

"Had the life of this illustrious painter, which closed on his birth-day in his thirty-seventh year, been prolonged to the period of that of Leonardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo, or Titian, when, in the space of seventeen years at Rome, he has given the world more unrivalled works of art than has fallen to the lot of any other painter, what an additional excellence might we not have expected in his works for subsequent generations to admire.

"The next distinguished artist who comes under our consideration is Titian. The grandeur which Michael Angelo gave to the human figure, Titian has rivalled in colour, and both were dignified during their lives with the appellation of The Divine.

"I will pass over the many appropriate portraits which he painted of men, and the portraits of women, though not the most dis-

tinguished for beauty, in the character of Venus, to meet the fashion of the age in which he lived ; and notice only those works of mental power which have raised him to eminence in the class of refined artists. On this point, you will find that his picture of St. Peter Martyr will justify the claim he has to that rank.

“ St. Peter the Martyr was the head of a religious sect : when on his way from the confines of Germany to Milan with a companion, he was attacked by one in opposition to his religious principles, while passing through a wood, and murdered. This is the subject of the picture. The prostrate figure of the saint, just fallen by a blow from the assassin, raises one of his hands towards heaven, with a countenance of confidence in eternal reward for the firmness of his faith ; while the assassin grasps with his left hand the mantle of his victim, the better to enable him, by his uplifted sword in the other hand, to give the fatal blow to the fallen saint. The companion is flying off in frantic dismay, and has received a wound in the head from the assassin.

“ The ferocious and determined action of the murderer bestriding the body of the fallen saint, completes a group of figures which have not a rival in art. The majestic trees, as well as the sable and rugged furze, form an awful back-ground to this tragical scene, every

way appropriate to the subject. The heavenly messengers seen in the glory above, bearing the palm branches as the emblem of reward for martyrdom, form the second light; the first being the sky and cloud, which give relief to the black drapery of the wounded companion; while the rays of light from the emanation above, sparkling on the dark branches of the trees as so many diamonds, tie together, by their light, all the others from the top to the bottom of the picture. The terror which the act of the murderer has spread, is denoted by the speed of the horsemen passing into the gloomy recesses of a distant part of the forest.

“ This picture, taken in the aggregate, is the first work in art in which the human figure and landscape are combined as an historical landscape, and where all the objects are the full size of nature.

“ When I saw this picture at Venice, 1761, it was then in the same state of purity as when the Bologna artists saw and studied it; and it is recorded that Caracci declared this picture to be without fault. But we have to lament the fatal effects which the goddess Bellona has ever occasioned to the fine arts, when she mounts her iron chariot of destruction. When this picture fell under her rapacious power, on board a French vessel passing down the Adriatic sea from Venice, one of our cruisers chased the vessel into the port of Ancona, and



a cannon-shot pierced the pannel on which the picture was painted, and shivered a portion of it into pieces.

“ On its arrival at Paris, the committee of the fine arts found it necessary to remove the painting from the pannel, and place it on canvass; but the picture has lost the principal light.

“ But to sum up Titian's powers of conception, no one has equalled him in the propriety and fitness of colour. His pictures of St. Peter Martyr, the David and Goliath, and the Last Supper, which is in the Escorial, stand in the very highest rank in art. On the latter of these pictures being finished, Titian, in his letter to the king, announcing the circumstance, says that it had been the labour of seven years. But by his original sketch in oil colours, which I have the good fortune to possess, and by which we may form an estimate, although the general effect and composition are unrivalled, the characters of the heads of the apostles are not equal to those of Leonardo da Vinci on the same subject.

“ Antonio Allegri da Corregio is the sixth source, whose emanating powers have illuminated the fine arts in the modern world. A superstitious mind, on seeing his works, would suppose that he had received his tuition in painting from the angels; as his figures seem to belong to another race of beings than man,

and to have something too celestial for the forms of earth to have presented to his view. Such have been the sayings of many on seeing his works at Parma; but, to my conception, he painted from the nature with which he was surrounded. His pictures of the Notte, St. Gierolimo, and the St. George, are evident proofs of the observation. In the first of these pictures his mental conception shines supreme. It is the idea of illuminating the child in the subject of our Saviour's Nativity. This splendid thought of giving light to the infant Christ, whose divine mission was to illuminate the human mind from Pagan darkness, no painter has since been so bold as to omit in any composition on the same subject. The two latter pictures have all the beauties seen in the paintings of this master, but they are deficient in appropriate character.

"The inspiring power of Corregio's works illuminated the genius of Parmegiano, the energetic movements of whose graceful figures have never been equalled, nor are they deficient in the moral influence of the art. His Moses breaking the tables in a church at Parma, and his picture of the Vision of St. Gierolimo, now in England, are filled with the impress of his intellectual powers, and stand pre-eminent over all his works.

"I have thus taken a survey of the works of art, which stand supreme among the pro-

ductions of Grecian and Italian genius, and which are the sources from which the subsequent schools have derived most of the principles of their celebrity.

“ The papal vortex drew into it nearly all the various powers of human refinement, and the inspiring influence of the first school in art having centered in Rome gave it superiority, till the Constable Bourbon, by sacking that city, obliged the fine arts to fly from their place, like doves from the vultures: they never re-appeared at Rome but with secondary power.

“ About a century subsequent to their flight from Rome, they were re-animated, and formed the second school of art in Italy, at the city of Bologna, under the Carracci, at the head of which was Ludovico. He and his two relatives, Hannibal and Augustine Carracci, derived their principles from the Venetian school, from Titian, Paul Veronese, and Tintoret, and from the Lombard school of Corregio and Parmegiano. But the good sense of Ludovico raised by them and himself a school of their own, which excelled in the power of delineating the human figure, but which power gave to that school more academical taste than mental character.

“ Their great work was that in the convent of St. Michael in Bosco, near Bologna; but this work has perished by damp, and the only



remains on record of what it was, are in the coarse prints which were done from copies executed when it was in good condition. But grand as it must have been, according to the evidence of these prints, it was but an academical composition.

“The picture by Ludovico, however, of Our Saviour’s Transfiguration on the Mount, consisting of six figures double the size of life, has embraced nearly all the points of art, and has placed the artist high in the first class of painters.

“The masters of the Bolognese school going to Rome and other parts of Italy, their successors at Bologna contented themselves by retailing the several manners of the three Carracci—Guido, Domenichino, and Guercino. This system of retailing continued to descend from master to pupil, until the school of Bologna sunk into irrecoverable imbecility.

“The most esteemed work in painting by Augustine Carracci is the Communion of St. Jerom. It possesses grandeur of style, is bold in execution, and the faces are not deficient in the appropriate expression of sensibility towards the object before them. It was on the composition of this picture that Domenichino formed his on the same subject, so much celebrated as to be considered next in merit to Raphael’s Transfiguration. But fine

as it is admitted to be, we must say, as a borrowed idea, it lessens the merit of the artist's originality of mind.

"The finest picture by Guido is in a church at Genoa, where he has brought to a focus all the force of his powers in grace and beauty, with an expression and execution of pencil rarely to be met with in art. The subject is the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. The angels who surround the Virgin have something in their faces so celestial, that they seem as if they had really descended from heaven, and sat to the artist while he painted them. The Virgin herself seems to have had the same complacency. The characters of the Apostles' heads are so exquisitely drawn and painted, as to be without competition in the works of any other painter.

"The most esteemed picture by Guercino is that of Santa Petranella, which he painted for St. Peter's church at Rome.

"But, gentlemen, if you aspire to excellence in your profession, you must not rest your future studies on the excellence of any individual, however exalted his name or genius; but, like the industrious bee, survey the whole face of nature, and sip the sweets from every flower. When thus enriched, lay up your acquisitions for future use; and with that enrichment from Nature's inexhaustible source, examine the great works of art to animate

your feelings, and to excite your emulation. When you are thus mentally enriched, and your hand practised to obey the powers of your will, you will then find your pencils, or your chisels, as magic wands, calling into view creations of your own, to adorn your name and your country.

“ I cannot, however, close this discourse without acknowledging a debt due from this Academy, as well as that which is due to the Academy itself. Soon after his present majesty had ascended the throne, his benign regard for the prosperity of the fine arts in these realms was manifested by his gracious commands to establish this favoured institution.

“ The heart of every artist, and of the friend of art, glowed with mutual congratulation to see a British king, for the first time, at the head of the fine arts. His Majesty nominated forty members guardians to his infant Academy; and that they have been faithful to the trust which he graciously reposed in them, the several apartments under this roof sufficiently testify. The professors are highly endowed with accomplishments and scientific knowledge in the several branches to which they are respectively appointed; and the funds able to render relief to the indigent and decayed artists, their widows and children.

“ Who can reflect for a moment on the rare



advantages here held out for the instruction of youthful genius, and the aid given to the decayed, their widows and helpless offspring, without feeling the grateful emotions of the heart rise towards a patriot king, for giving to the arts this home within the walls of a stately mansion, and towards the members of this Academy, who, as his faithful guardians, have so ably fulfilled the purpose for which the institution was formed.

“ United to what the academicians have done, and are doing, another honourable establishment, sanctioned by his majesty for promoting the fine arts, has been created and composed of noblemen and gentlemen, whose known zeal for the success of refined art is so conspicuous and honourable to themselves.

“ Such have been the efforts to give splendour to the fine arts in this country, and such are the results which have attended these exertions, that, knowing as we do the movements of the arts on the continent, I may confidently say, that our annual exhibitions, both as to number and taste, engrafted on nature, and the fruit of mental conception, are such that all the combined efforts in art on the continent of Europe in the same time have not been able to equal. To such attainments, were those in power but to bestow the crumbs from the national table to cherish the fine arts, we might pledge ourselves that the ge-

nus of Britain would in a few years dispute the prize with the proudest periods of Grecian or Italian art. But, gentlemen, let us not despair; we have heard from this place the promise of patronage from the Prince-regent, the propitious light of a morning that will open into perfect day, invigorating the growth of all around—the assurance of a new era to the elevation of the fine arts in the United Kingdom.”





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# CATALOGUE OF PICTURES

PAINTED BY THE LATE

**BENJAMIN WEST, ESQ.**

PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY;

INCLUDING

A DESCRIPTION OF THE GREAT PICTURES,

**CHRIST REJECTED, AND DEATH ON THE  
PALE HORSE:**

EXHIBITED AT

**No. 14, NEWMAN STREET.**

M

ALPHABETICALLY

EDITED BY THE LATE

REVEREND FATHER

OF THE SOCIETY OF

MISSIONARIES

OF THE DIocese OF

THE EAST INDIES

AND

CHINA

AND

THE EAST INDIES

AND

THE EAST INDIES

AND

## WEST'S GALLERY.

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### ENTRANCE GALLERY.

- No. 1. Psyche obtaining the Guarded Water.
- No. 2. Sheep Washing.
- No. 3. View on the Susquehannah.
- No. 4. Death of Sir Philip Sydney — of Epaminondas — and of Chevalier Bayard. — (In one frame.)
- No. 5. View near Hammersmith.
- No. 6. The Angel delivering St. Peter.
- No. 7. Angels at the Tomb of Our Saviour.
- No. 8. King Lear and Cordelia.
- No. 9. Installation of the Knights of the Garter.
- No. 10. King Edward the Third crowning Ribemond at Calais.
- No. 11. Surrender of Calais.
- No. 12. King Richard pardoning his Brother John.
- No. 13. Procession of Queen Elizabeth.
- No. 14. Cupid sleeping on a Bed of Roses.
- No. 15. Child crossing the Water.



No. 16. Edward the Third embracing his Son after the Battle of Cressy.

No. 17. Edward the Black Prince receiving King John of France Prisoner.

No. 18. Thetis bringing the Armour to Achilles.

No. 19. A Madonna and Child.

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### GREAT ROOM.

No. 20. The Nativity. (over the door.)—St. Luke, chap. 2.

No. 21. Tobit.

No. 22. The Brazen Serpent.—Numbers, chap. 21.

No. 23. Saul Prophesying. — 1 Samuel, chap. 10.

No. 24. The Return of the Prodigal Son.

No. 25. The Resurrection of Our Saviour. (A sketch.)

No. 26. The Wise Men's Offering. — St. Matthew, chap. 2.

No. 27. Raising the Widow's Son.—1 Kings, chap. 17.

No. 28. The Baptism of Our Saviour by St. John.—St. Matthew, chap. 3.

No. 29. The Birth of Jacob and Esau.—Genesis, chap. 5, verse 24.

### No. 30. CHRIST REJECTED.

#### THE SUBJECT.

The subject of this picture is,—*Christ re-*

*jected by the Jewish High Priest, the Elders, and the People, when brought to them by Pilate from the Judgment-hall.*

The wonderful events, of which this incident forms so striking a portion, took place when empire had reached its zenith under the Romans, and universal peace prevailed. They had been distinctly foretold by the inspired writers, and no meaner agents than angels from Heaven had announced the advent of the Messiah, "glorifying God in the highest, and proclaiming on earth peace and good will towards men:"—thus awfully preparing the minds of men for the approach of an epoch, in which a new and mighty influence would overturn all the established moral and religious systems of the civilized world, making darkness and destruction vanish before and give place to light and immortality.

For such a subject an epic composition was demanded; for it seemed every way proper, that the principal characters in the history, as well as the Divine Chief himself, should be brought together on the canvass, and represented by the pencil, as they had been described by the hallowed prophets and holy evangelists.

For the purpose of assisting the beholder in a proper understanding of the picture, the following selections have been made from the sacred writings:—

He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth : he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.—Isaiah, chap. 53.

When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus, to put him to death :

And when they had bound him they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

When Pilate was sat down on the judgment-seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man, for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

But the chief priests and elders persuading the multitude that they should ask Barabbas and destroy Jesus :

Pilate said unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ? They all said unto him, Let him be crucified.

When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he said, I am innocent of the blood of this just person : see ye to it.

Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us and our children.—St. Matthew, chap. 27.

So Pilate released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus to be scourged ; when they took off the robe, and led him into the hall called the Prætorium, where they gathered together the whole band : and they smote him on the head with a reed



and did spit upon him—bowed their knees and hailed him King of the Jews.—St. Mark, chap. 15.

Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man.

And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.

When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether this man were a Galilean?

And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself was also at Jerusalem.

And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.

And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a *gorgeous* robe, and sent him again to Pilate.

And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together; for before they were at enmity between themselves.

And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus unto their will.

And as they led him away, there followed a company of people and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him.

And there were also two malefactors led with him to be put to death.—St. Luke, chap. 23.

Then came Jesus forth wearing the crown of thorns and the *gorgeous* robe, and Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man.

When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him and crucify him, for I find no fault in him.

The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.—St. John, chap. 19.

The picture therefore represents the events which took place when Pilate brought forth Jesus, crowned with thorns, and in the gorgeous robe with which he had been arrayed by Herod. Wishing to save Jesus, Pilate said unto the high priest and elders, "I find no fault in this man wherewith you accuse him; shall I release unto you this man or Barabbas?" "Not this man, but Barabbas," replied the priests and elders; "for we have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God."—Pilate said unto them, "Shall I crucify your king?" Then the chief priests, the elders, the scribes, and the people, cried with loud voices, saying, "We have no king but Cæsar; we found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, and saying that he is Christ the King: therefore away with him, away with him, and crucify him!"

This is the immediate point of time expressed in the picture.

There are introduced into the picture incidents which the epic demands, such as the

sorrow of St. Peter, the attachment of Joseph of Arimathea, &c. so that the spectator has before him every object necessary to the explanation and unity of the story.—By the following short sketch of all these objects and incidents, the spectator's reading and recollection will be refreshed, and the entire subject, it is hoped, brought more correctly under his view.

#### THE PICTURE DESCRIBED.

On the right side of the picture are the Roman soldiers attendant on Pilate, who have Jesus in their custody; and by their bearing the standard of the emperor Tiberius, the period is marked when the occurrence took place. Their commander, the centurion, stands with a martial appearance, sedately considering the awful event, surrounded by his family. Next to these, and to a man disrobing Christ, is the main group in the solemn incident, consisting of,—1. The Saviour, whom the pencil has wished to represent as standing with a divine composure, while, with a dignified and mute pensiveness and resignation, he is absorbed in the grandeur of the end for which he “came into the world,”—evincing this tranquillity amidst the thoughtless and savage tumult of men who were condemning him to the most cruel and lingering death:—2. Pilate, who, presenting the Divine Captive to the peo-



ple for their decision, solicits the high priest and the furious assembly in his behalf: he is designated as the Roman emperor's representative by the wreath of laurel on his head:—3. The High Priest; he is arrayed in all the pomp of his high station, and with a bitterness of feeling long since impelling to the Saviour's destruction, cries out to the multitude, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him."

Behind the high priest is a throng of persons—some deliberating on this extraordinary event, while the many outrageously denounce their hated object, and insult him with opprobrious looks, gesture, and language. In the front of these, having pressed forward with veneration and love for the accused, is Joseph of Arimathea, ruminating on the solemn occurrence;—James the Less, feeling anxious to see the result of the proceedings against his Lord; and St. Peter, who, filled with remorse at his former conduct, having denied his Saviour, "went out and wept bitterly." This central line of figures is terminated on the left by the murderer Barabbas, and the two thieves, who have been just brought from their confinement, and are attended by officers who are delivering them into the custody of others.

The fore-ground group, on the right, consists of the executioner sitting on the cross, and two soldiers in their state of military subordination, waiting for farther commands;

with two youths, who are affected in a manner natural to their early sensibilities, at hearing the executioner explain the purpose of the different implements of crucifixion : they are enquiring of him the meaning of these preparations—he replies in explanation, by pointing to his feet with a nail, which is to pierce the feet of Jesus.

In the middle of the fore-ground is the converted Magdalen, who, forgetful even of her sex, falls on the fatal instrument of her Saviour's death, and gazes at him in the full burst of despair.

Near to the Mary Magdalen, and with her hands compressed in sudden emotion, is the third Mary. All the others are the pious women from Galilee, who came to administer to Christ, and whom he saw weeping as he passed to be crucified, when he made that memorable speech—"Weep not for me, ye daughters of Israel."

In the midst of these stands the beloved disciple John, supporting the Mother of Jesus,—a representation in unison with our Saviour's words to his mother when he was on the cross—"Woman, behold thy son;" and to the beloved disciple—"Behold thy mother." The grief of the mother of Jesus it has been the design of the pencil to exhibit as being more tender, inward, dignified, and submissive, in consequence of her previous knowledge of the

indispensable fulfilment of the Scriptures respecting her Son and Saviour; "all things being made known to her."

In the gallery are seen a number of persons brought there by curiosity, dislike, or admiration of the sacred sufferer. In the centre gallery is Herod, with his "men of war" and court. The wife of Pilate accompanying him, marks the reconciliation of the two chiefs. She is earnestly looking at the "just person for whom she had that day suffered many things in a dream."

The preparations for the scourging and crucifying Christ, are denoted by the brutal characters who are removing the *gorgeous* robe from his shoulders, and by the indecent and malignant zeal of the man who appears eager to inflict the destined scourge.

The architectural back-ground denotes the Roman magnificence wherever they had established imperial sway.

#### OBJECT OF THE ARTIST.

It was Mr. West's object, in the delineation of this subject, to excite feelings in the spectator similar to those produced by a perusal of the sacred texts, which so pathetically describe these awful events. As part of the means for accomplishing this end, several incidents, which were in connexion with the main circumstance, were introduced, to contrast with the meekness



and sufferings of the "man of sorrows," and to shew the simplicity and purity of the gospel dispensation, in opposition to the gaudy and earthly objects of the heathen and Jewish systems. The delineation of nearly the whole scale of human passions, from the basest to those which partake most of the divine nature, has thus been necessarily attempted.

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No. 31. Christ healing the Infirm in the Temple.—St. Matthew, chap. 4.

No. 32. The Naming of John.—St. Luke, chap. 1.

No. 33. Paul and Barnabas.

No. 34. Maries at the Sepulchre.—St. Matthew, chap. 28.

No. 35. The Overthrow of the Old Beast and False Prophet.—Revelations, chap. 19.

No. 36. The Resurrection of our Saviour. (A sketch.)

No. 37. Paul and Barnabas.—Acts, chap. 13.

No. 38. The Last Supper.—St. Luke, chap. 22.

No. 39. Portrait of the late B. West, Esq. President of the Royal Academy. Painted by Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A.

No. 40. St. Peter's First Sermon.—Acts, chap. 2.

No. 41. Abraham going to Sacrifice.—Genesis, chap. 22.

No. 42. The Angel at the Tomb of Christ.—St. Matthew, chap. 28.

No. 43. Christ comparing the Kingdom of Heaven to Little Children.—St. Matthew, chap. 18.

No. 44. The Wise Men's Offering.—St. Matthew, chap. 2, verse 11.

No. 45. Christ healing the Sick and the Lame in the Temple. (A sketch of the large picture in the possession of the Directors of the British Institution.)

No. 46. Moses and Aaron sacrificing.—Exodus, chap. 29.

No. 47. The Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise.

No. 48.

**DEATH ON THE PALE HORSE; or the Opening of the First Five Seals.**—Revelations, chap. 6.

Verse 1. And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

2. And I saw, and behold, a White Horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him; and he went forth conquering, and to conquer

3. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.

4. And there went out another Horse that was Red; and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that

they should kill one another : and there was given unto him a great sword.

5. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo, a Black Horse : and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

7. And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

8. And I looked, and behold, a Pale Horse, and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto him over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

9. And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held.

10. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood, on them that dwell on the earth ?

And 11. And white robes were given unto every one of them, that they should rest for yet a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE PICTURE.

The general effect proposed to be excited by this picture is the terrible sublime and its various modifications, until lost in the opposite extremes of pity and horror, a sentiment which painting has so seldom attempted to



awaken, that a particular description of the subject will probably be acceptable to the public.

In poetry the same effect is produced by a few abrupt and rapid gleams of description, touching, as it were with fire, the features and edges of a general mass of awful obscurity; but in painting such indistinctness would be a defect, and imply that the artist wanted the power to pourtray the conception of his fancy. Mr. West was of opinion, that, to delineate a physical form, which in its moral impression would approximate to that of the visionary Death of Milton, it was necessary to endow it if possible with the appearance of superhuman strength and energy: he has therefore exerted the utmost force and perspicuity of his pencil on the central figure. He has depicted the king of terrors with the physiognomy of the dead in a charnel-house, but animated almost to ignition with inextinguishable rage—placed on his head the kingly crown, and clothed the length of his limbs with a spacious robe of funereal sable. His uplifted right hand holds no sceptre, but is entwined with the serpent which first brought death into the world, and he launches his darts from both hands in all directions with a merciless impartiality. His horse rushes forward with the universal wildness of a tempestuous element, breathing livid pestilence, and rearing and trampling

with the vehemence of unbridled fury. Behind him is seen an insidious dæmon bearing the torch of Discord, with a monstrous progeny of the reptile world—

“ All prodigious things,  
Abominable, unutterable, and worse  
Than fables yet have feign'd or fear conceiv'd,  
Gorgons and hydras, and chimeras dire”—

—the ministers of hell, who had “ power given to them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with disease, and with the beasts of the earth.”

The next character on the canvass in point of consequence, is *the Rider on the White Horse*. As he is supposed to represent the Gospel, it was requisite that he should be invested with those exterior indications of purity, excellence, and dignity, which are associated in our minds with the name and offices of the Messiah. But it was not the Saviour healing and comforting the afflicted, or “ the meek and lowly Jesus,” bearing with resignation the scorn and hatred of the scoffing multitude, that was to be represented—it was the King of kings going forth “ conquering and to conquer,” to bruise the head of the serpent, and finally to put all things under his feet. He is therefore painted with a solemn countenance, expressive of a mind filled with the thoughts of a great enterprise; and he advances onward in his sublime career with that serene majesty in which Di-

vine Providence continues, through the storms and commotions of the temporal world, to execute its eternal purposes. He is armed with a bow and arrows, the force and arguments of Truth, and leaves behind him as passing vapour all those terrible tumults and phantoms which make up the auxiliaries and retinue of Death. At the first view he seems to be only a secondary character, but, on considering the business of the scene, it will be obvious that he is the great leader, and that all the others but follow in his train, and carry into effect the inferior objects of his heavenly mission, as he goes towards that glorious region, in which appear "the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held."

The third of the apocalyptic characters is *the Rider on the Red Horse*. Mr. West has represented him simply as a warrior armed with "the great sword." He is advancing in the same direction as the Messiah, thereby intimating that those wars which have accompanied the progress of the Christian religion, and of which he is the type and emblem, are a part of the divine scheme for effectually diffusing it throughout the whole earth. It will be observed, that the horse in this instance is caparisoned as a war-horse; but those of Death and the Messiah are without reins, being guided only by the will of their riders. The prophetic vista beyond this character



shews in one division the Romans under Titus returning with the spoils of Jerusalem, and in the other, crusaders contending with Saracens.

Behind the Messiah and the warrior, *the Rider on the Black Horse* is seen coming forward. He is represented with the steady countenance of a man scrupulous in his estimate of things; stern in his decisions, and likely to require the execution of his adjudications with the unrelenting solemnity of a terrible judge. He bears those balances in his hands in which mankind are "weighed and found wanting," and Pestilence and Famine are seen before him in the form of a wretched woman and an emaciated man, absorbed in the feelings of their own particular misery. He follows the two preceding characters, and is supposed to typify that sceptical philosophy, which affects to estimate Christianity by the temporary circumstances that have arisen in the course of its progress, while it is itself but a part of the great cloud of mysteries which envelopes the present and future purposes of religion.

The domestic group in the fore-ground represents a family belonging to that class of society who are supposed to be safe beyond the reach of the ordinary casualties of life, but who are still not farther remote from the darts of Death. It is here that the painter has at-

tempted to excite the strongest degree of pity which his subject admitted, and to contrast the surrounding horrors with images of tenderness and beauty. The mother, in the prime of life, is represented as having expired in the act of embracing her children, and the woe of sudden death is still more emphatically expressed in the lovely infant that has fallen from her breast. The husband deprecates the wrath of the hideous spectre that advances over them all, while the surviving daughter catches hold of her mother, sensible only to the loss which she has sustained by the death of so kind a parent.

In the other groups, which form the right-hand division in the picture, the artist has shewn the anarchy of the combats of men with the beasts of the earth. The chief of the human figures in this division, is one in the act of launching his javelin at a lion, which has seized and brought down a man and his horse. In the character with the javelin, Mr. West has endeavoured to delineate that species of courageous muscular strength, which enables some men to face with an undaunted countenance the rage of the most ferocious animals. The sedate bravery of his look affords a fine contrast to the alarm and terror of the man who is seized by the enraged lion, which he had wounded with his spear. Below them is a youth who has broken his lance in the com-

bat, and received a fatal blow on the head; behind them, a horseman comes forward with an uplifted sword, in the act of striking at a lioness that is springing upon him and his horse. But the story of this group would have been incomplete, had the lions not been shewn conquerors to a certain extent, by the two wounded men who are thrown down as overcome beneath the hoofs of the horse of Death. The one with his back towards the spectator seems to regain his strength, and by still holding his dagger, indicates a wish to renew the fight; the other, irrecoverably dashed out of the combat, and having lost his weapon, grasps at the head of his horse with a useless exertion of bewildered sense. The pyramidal form of this large division is perfected by a furious bull torn by dogs, as he tosses on his horns the body of a youth.

In this portion of the picture the firmament is rent asunder by bursts of lightning, and a distant group is seen startled by the death of a young man who has been struck with the thunderbolt, and whose friends support him in their arms. The interest of the episode is increased by the figure of a young woman flying from the scene in terror, but who is still induced to look back as if constrained by affection for the victim.

The principle of destruction is exemplified through every part of the subject. In the



upper region of the clouds the audacious eagle is seen pouncing on the heron, and near the dead serpent in the fore-ground the affectionate dove deplores its mate that has just expired.

No. 49. The Overthrow of Pharaoh and his Host.—Exodus, chap. 14.

No. 50. The Water subsiding after the Deluge.—Genesis, chap. 8.

No. 51. Christ and the Angel.

No. 52. St. Stephen. (A sketch of the large picture in St. Stephen's church, Walbrook.)

No. 53. The Ascension of our Saviour. (A sketch.)—St. Luke, chap. 24.

No. 54. The Baptism of our Saviour. (A sketch.)

No. 55. Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh.—Exodus, chap. 7.

No. 56. Raising the Shunammite's Son.—2 Kings, chap. 4.

No. 57. St. Peter's First Sermon. (A sketch.)

#### INNER ROOM.

No. 58. Omnia vincit Amor.

No. 59. The Bard.

No. 60. Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh. (A sketch.)

No. 61. St. Peter and St. John running towards the Sepulchre.—St. John, chap. 20.

No. 62. The Resurrection of our Saviour.—St. Matthew, chap. 28.

No. 63. The Overthrow of Pharaoh and his Host. (A sketch.)

No. 64. The Maries going to the Tomb of Jesus.—St. Luke, chap. 24.

No. 65. The Boys and Grapes. (The last picture painted by Mr. West.)

No. 66. The Picture first painted by Mr. West, when a child.

No. 67. Mr. West's Family. (The property of Mr. R. L. West.)

No. 68. Mr. West's Garden, upon which the present large room is erected.

No. 69. The Ascension of our Saviour.—Acts, chap. 1.

No. 70. Narcissus.

No. 71. The Infant St. John.

No. 72. Simeon.—St. Luke, chap. 2.

No. 73. The Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise. (A sketch.)

No. 74. Aaron Sacrificing. (A sketch.)

No. 75. Moses viewing the promised Land.—Deuteronomy, chap. 34.

No. 76. The Nativity. (A sketch.)

No. 77. The Prophet Jeremiah.

No. 78. Daniel interpreting the Writing on the Wall.—Daniel, chap. 5.

No. 79. Moses receiving the Laws.—Exodus, chap. 31.

No. 80. The Prophet Isaiah.

No. 81. Tobit and the Angel.

No. 82. Paul and Barnabas. (A sketch.)

No. 83. The Covenant of the Ark.—Joshua, chap. 3.

No. 84. Belisarius.

No. 85. Noah Sacrificing.—Genesis, chap. 8.

No. 86. The Messiah.—Revelations, chap. 1.

No. 87. Alexander the Second, King of Scotland, rescued from the fury of a Stag by Colin Fitzgerald.

No. 88. Chryseïs restored to her Father.

No. 89. Cave of Despair.

No. 90. Nathan and David. — 2 Samuel, chap. 12.

No. 91. The Crucifixion of our Saviour.—St. Luke, chap. 23, St. Matthew, chap. 27.

No. 92. Pætus and Arria.

No. 93. Abraham going to Sacrifice. (A sketch.)

No. 94. The Golden Age.



A  
CATALOGUE

OF THE

PAINTINGS OF MR. WEST.

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Regulus.

Hannibal.

Epaminondas.

Bayard.

Wolfe, the first and second.

Cyrus, and the King of Armenia with his Family, captives.

Germanicus and Segestus with his Daughter, captives.

The Apotheosis of Prince Alfred and Prince Octavius.

The picture of the Damsel accusing Peter.

The Queen, with the Princess Royal, in one picture.

Prince Ernest and Prince Augustus ; Princesses Augusta, Elizabeth, and Mary, in one picture.

Prince William and Prince Edward, in one picture.

Prince Octavius.

The whole-length portrait of His Majesty in Regimentals, with Lord Amherst and the Marquis of Lothian on Horseback, in the back-ground.

The whole-length portrait of Her Majesty, with the fourteen Royal Children.

The same repeated.

The Battle of Cressy, when Edward III. embraced his son.

The Battle of Poitiers, when John King of France is brought prisoner to the Prince.

The Institution of the Order of the Garter.

The Battle of Nevil's Cross.

The Burgesses of Calais before Edward III.

Edward III. crossing the Somme.

Edward III. crowning Ribemont, at Calais.

St. George destroying the Dragon.

The design of our Saviour's Resurrection, painted in colours, with the Women going to the Sepulchre; also Peter and John.

The cartoon from the above design, for the east window, painted in the Collegiate Church of Windsor, on glass, 36 feet high by 28 wide.

The design of our Saviour's Crucifixion, painted in colours.

The cartoon from the above design, for the west window in the Collegiate Church, painting on glass, 36 feet by 28.

The cartoon of the Angels appearing to the Shepherds, for ditto, ditto.

The cartoon of the Nativity of our Saviour, for ditto, ditto.

The cartoon of the Magi presenting Gifts to our Saviour, for ditto, ditto.

The picture, in water-colours, representing Hymen leading and dancing with the Hours before Peace and Plenty.

The picture, in water-colours, of Boys with the Insignia of Riches.

The companion, with Boys, and the Insignia of the Fine Arts.

Genius calling forth the Fine Arts to adorn Manufactures and Commerce, and recording the names of eminent men in those pursuits.

Husbandry aided by Arts and Commerce.

Peace and Riches cherishing the Fine Arts.

Manufacture giving support to Industry, in Boys and Girls.

Marine and inland Navigation enriching Britannia.

Printing aided by the Fine Arts.

Astronomy making new discoveries in the Heavens.

The Four Quarters of the World bringing Treasures to the Lap of Britannia.

Civil and Military Architecture defending and adorning Empire.

The Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise.

The Deluge.

Noah sacrificing.

Abraham and his Son Isaac going to sacrifice.

The Birth of Jacob and Esau.

The Death of Jacob in Egypt, surrounded by his Twelve Sons.

Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh; their Rods turned into Serpents.

Pharaoh and his Host lost in the Red Sea, while Moses stretches his Rod over them.

Moses receiving the Law on Mount Sinai.

Moses consecrateth Aaron and his Sons to the Priesthood.

Moses sheweth the Brazen Serpent to the People to be healed.

Moses shewn the Promised Land from the top of Mount Pisgah.



Joshua crossing the river Jordan with the Ark.  
 The Twelve Tribes drawing Lots for the Lands  
 of their Inheritance, 6 feet by 10.

The Call of Isaiah and Jeremiah, each 5 by 14.

David anointed King, 6 by 10.

Christ's Birth, 6 by 10.

The naming of John; or, the Prophecies of  
 Zacharias, ditto.

The Kings bringing Presents to Christ, 6 by 12.

Christ among the Doctors, 6 by 10.

The Descent of the Holy Ghost on our Saviour  
 at the River Jordan, 10 by 14.

Christ healing the Sick in the Temple, ditto.

Christ's Last Supper, 6 by 10.

Christ's Crucifixion, 16 by 28.

Christ's Ascension, 12 by 18.

The Inspiration of St. Peter, 10 by 14.

Paul and Barnabas rejecting the Jews, and re-  
 ceiving the Gentiles, ditto.

John called to write the Revelation, 6 by 10.

Saints prostrating themselves before the Throne  
 of God.

The opening of the Seven Seals; or, Death on  
 the Pale Horse.

The overthrowing the Old Beast and False  
 Prophet.

The Last Judgment.

The New Jerusalem.

The picture of St. Michael and his Angels fight-  
 ing and casting out the Red Dragon and his  
 Angels.

Do. of the Women clothed in the Sun.

Do. of John called to write the Revelation.

Do. of the Beast rising out of the Sea.

Do. of the Mighty Angel, one Foot upon Sea and the other on Earth.

Do. of St. Anthony of Padua.

Do. of the Madre Doloroso.

Do. of Simeon, with the Child in his arms.

A picture of a small Landscape, with a Hunt passing in the back-ground.

Do. of Abraham and Isaac going to sacrifice.

Do. of a whole-length figure of Thomas à Becket, larger than life.

Do. of the Angel in the Sun assembling the Birds of the Air, before the destruction of the Old Beast.

Four half-lengths.

The small picture of the Order of the Garter, differing in composition from the great picture at Windsor.

The picture of the Shunamite's Son raised to Life by the Prophet Elisha.

Do. of Jacob blessing Joseph's Sons.

Do. of the Death of Wolfe, the third picture.

Do. of the Battle of La Hogue.

Do. of the Boyne.

Do. of the Restoration of Charles II.

Do. of Cromwell dissolving the Long Parliament.

A small portrait of General Wolfe, when a Boy.

The picture of the Golden Age.

The picture of St. Michael chaining the Dragon, in Trinity College, Cambridge, 15 by 8.

Do. of the Angels announcing the Birth of our Saviour, in the Cathedral Church at Rochester, 10 by 6.

Do. of the Death of St. Stephen, in the church of St. Stephen, Walbrook, 10 by 18.

Do. of the Raising of Lazarus, in the Cathedral of Winchester, 10 by 14.

Do. of St. Paul shaking the Viper off his Finger, in the chapel at Greenwich, 27 by 15.

The Supper, over the communion-table in the Collegiate Church at Windsor, 8 by 13.

The Resurrection of our Saviour, in the east window of the Collegiate Church at Windsor, 28 by 32.

The Crucifixion, in the window of ditto, 28 by 36.

The Angel announcing our Saviour's Birth, in ditto, 10 by 14.

The Birth of our Saviour, in ditto, 9 by 16.

The Kings presenting Gifts to our Saviour, in ditto, 9 by 16.

The picture of Peter denying our Saviour, in the Chapel of Lord Newark.

The Resurrection of our Saviour, in the Church of Barbadoes, 40 by 6.

The picture of Moses with the Law, and John the Baptist, in ditto, as large as life.

The picture of Telemachus and Calypso.

Do. of Angelica and Madora.

Do. of the Damsel and Orlando.

Do. of Cicero at the Tomb of Archimedes.

Do. of St. Paul's Conversion; his Persecution of the Christians; and the Restoration of his Sight, under the hands of Ananias, in one frame, divided in three parts.

Do. of Mr. Hope's Family, containing nine figures as large as life.

Large figures of Faith, Hope, Charity, Innocence, St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, St. John, St. Matthias, St. Thomas, St. Jude, St. Simon, St.



James Major, St. Philip, St. Peter, St. Andrew,  
St. Bartholomew, St. James Minor, Malachi,  
Micah, Zachariah, and Daniel.

Paul shaking the Viper from his Finger.

Paul preaching at Athens.

Elymas the Sorcerer struck blind.

Cornelius and the Angel.

Peter delivered from Prison.

The Conversion of St. Paul.

Paul before Felix.

Two whole-lengths of the late Archbishop of  
York's two eldest Sons.

A whole-length portrait of the late Lord Gros-  
venor.

The picture of Jacob drawing Water at the  
Well for Rachael and her Flock, in the posses-  
sion of Mr. Evans.

The picture of the Citizens of London offering  
the Crown to William the Conqueror.

The Queen soliciting the King to pardon her  
son John.

Moses shewing the Brazen Serpent.

John shewing the Lamb of God.

Three of the Children of the late Archbishop  
of York, with the portrait of the Archbishop,  
half-lengths, in the possession of the Rev. Dr.  
Drummond.

The Family-picture, half-lengths, of Mrs. Cart-  
wright's Children.

Do. of Sir Edmund Baker, Nephew and Niece,  
half-length.

Do. of ——— Lunis, Esq.'s Children, half-  
lengths.

A Lady leading three Children along the Path  
of Virtue to the Temple.

A picture of Madora.

The picture of the late Lord Clive receiving the Duanric from the Great Mogul, for Lord Clive.

Christ healing the Sick and Lame in the Temple, in the Pennsylvanian Hospital, Philadelphia, 11 feet by 18.

The picture of Pylades and Orestes, for Sir George Beaumont.

The original sketch of Cicero at the Tomb of Archimedes, for ditto.

The picture of Leonidas ordering Cleombrotus into Banishment, with his Wife and Children, for W. Smith, Esq.

Do. of the Marys at the Sepulchre, for General Stibert.

Do. of Alexander and his Physician, for ditto.

Do. of Julius Cæsar reading the Life of Alexander.

Do. of the Return of the Prodigal Son, for Sir James Earle.

Do. of the Death of Adonis, for — Knight, Esq. Portland Place.

Do. of the Continnence of Scipio, ditto.

Do. of Venus and Cupid, oval, for Mr. Steers Temple.

Do. of Alfred dividing his Loaf, presented to Stationers' Hall by Alderman Boydell.

Do. of Helen brought to Paris, in the possession of a family in Kent.

A small sketch of the Shunamite's Son restored, &c.

Cupid stung by a Bee, oval, for — Vesey, Esq. in Ireland.

Agrippina surrounded by her Children, and re-

clining her Head on the Urn containing the ashes of Germanicus, ditto.

The Death of Wolfe, the fourth picture, for Lord Bristol.

A do. of do. the fourth picture, in the possession of the Prince of Waldeck.

A small do. of do. the fifth picture, ditto Moncton family.

A small picture of Romeo and Juliet, for the Duke of Courland.

A small picture of King Lear and his Daughters, ditto.

Do. of Belisarius and the Boy, for Sir Francis Baring.

Do. of Sir Francis Baring and part of his Family, containing six figures as large as life, ditto.

Do. of Simeon and the Child, as large as life, for the Provost of Eton.

Do. of the late Lord Clive receiving the Duanic from the Great Mogul, a second picture, for Madras.

The second picture of Philippa soliciting of Edward III. the pardon of the Burgesses of Calais, in the possession of — Willet, Esq.

Do. of Europa on the Back of the Bull, at Calcutta.

Do. of the Death of Hyacinthus, painted for Lord Kerry, but now in the National Gallery at Paris.

The picture of Venus presenting the Girdle to Juno, painted for Lord Kerry, and in the National Gallery; figures as large as life in both pictures.

Do. of Rinaldo and Armida, for Caleb Whitford, Esq.

Do. of Pharaoh's Daughter with the Child



Moses, for — Park, Esq. the original painted for General Lawrence.

Do. of the Stolen Kiss, painted for ditto, and in the possession of ditto.

Do. of Angelica and Madora, for ditto, ditto.

Do. of the Woman of Samaria at the Well with Christ, ditto.

Do. of Pætus and Arria, in the possession of Col. Smith, at the Tower.

Do. of Rebecca coming to David, for Sir J. Ashley.

The Drawing respecting Christ's Nativity, for Mr. Tomkins, Doctors' Commons.

Do. of Rebecca receiving the Bracelets at the Well, for the late Lord Buckinghamshire.

The drawing of the Stolen Kiss, ditto.

Do. of Rinaldo and Armida, ditto.

Do. of a Mother and Child, ditto.

The whole-length portrait of Sir Thomas Strange, in the Town-hall of Halifax.

Do. of Sir John Sinclair.

The picture of Agrippina landing at Brundisium (the first picture,) in the possession of Lord Kinnoul.

Do. of do. for the Earl of Exeter, at Burleigh, second picture.

Do. of do. (third picture,) in the possession of — Hatch, Esq., in Essex.

A small picture of Jupiter and Semele: the large picture lost at sea.

Hector parting with his Wife and Child at the Sun Gate.

The prophet Elisha raising the Shunamite's son.

The raising of Lazarus.

Edward III. crossing the river Somme.

Queen Philippa at the Battle of Nevil's Cross.

The Angels announcing to the Shepherds the Birth of our Saviour.

The Magi bringing Presents to our Saviour.

A view on the River Thames at Hammersmith.

A do. on the banks of the River Susquehanna, in America.

The picture of Tangire Mill, at Eton.

Do. of Chrysëis returned to her father Chryses.

Venus and Adonis, large as life.

The sixth picture of the Death of Wolfe.

The first and second picture of the Battle of La Hogue.

The sketch of Macbeth and the Witches.

The small picture of the Return of Tobias.

The small picture of the Return of the Prodigal Son.

Do. of Ariadne on the Sea-shore.

Do. of the Death of Adonis.

Do. of John King of France, brought to the Black Prince.

Do. of Antiochus and Stratonice.

Do. of King Lear and his Daughter.

The picture of Chryses on the Sea-shore.

Do. of Nathan and David:—"Thou art the Man!" as large as life.

Do. of Elijah raising the Widow's Son to Life.

Do. of the Choice of Hercules.

Do. of Venus and Europa.

Do. of Daniel interpreting the Hand-writing on the Wall.

Do. of the Ambassador from Tunis, with his Attendant, as he appeared in England in 1781.

The drawing of Marius on the Ruins of Carthage.

Do. of Cato giving his Daughter in Marriage on his Death, both in the possession of the Archduke Joseph.

Do. of Belisarius brought to his Family.

The large picture of the Stag, or the rescuing of Alexander the Third, for Lord Seaforth, 12 feet by 18.

The picture of Cymon and Iphigenia, and Endymion and Diana, at Wentworth Castle, Yorkshire.

Do. of Cymon and Iphigenia, and Angelica and Madora, in the possession of Mr. Mitton, of Shropshire, painted at Rome.

Small picture of the battle of Cressy.

Small sketch of the Order of the Garter.

Mr. West's small picture of his Family.

The sketch of Edward the Third with his Queen, and the Citizens of Calais.

Mr. West's small copy from Vandyke's picture of Cardinal Bentivoglio, now in the National Gallery at Paris.

Mr. West's copy from Corregio's celebrated picture at Parma, viz. the St. Girolamo, now in the National Gallery.

The large Landscape from Windsor Forest.

The picture of Mark Antony shewing the Robe and Will of Julius Cæsar to the People.

Do. of Ægisthus viewing the Body of Clytemnestra.

The large sketch of the window at Windsor, of the Magi presenting Gifts to the Infant Christ.

The small sketch of the Battle of Nevil's Cross.

The second small sketch of the Order of the Garter.



The small picture of Ophelia before the King and Queen, with her brother Laertes.

Do. of the Recovery of His Majesty in the year 1789.

Do. from Thomson's Seasons, of Miranda and her Two Companions.

Do. of Edward the Third crowning Ribemont at Calais, a sketch.

The picture of Leonidas taking leave of his Family on his going to Thermopylæ.

Do. of a Bacchanté, as large as life, half-length.

First sketch of the Battle of Cressy.

The picture of Phaëton soliciting Apollo for the Chariot of the Sun.

The second picture of Cicero at the Tomb of Archimedes.

The small picture of Belisarius and the Boy, different from that in the possession of Sir Francis Baring.

The small picture of the Eagle giving the Vase of Water to Psyche.

Do. of the Death of Adonis, from Anacreon.

Do. of Moonlight and the "Beckoning Ghost," from Pope's Elegy.

Do. of the Angel sitting on the Stone at the Sepulchre.

Second picture of the same, but differing in composition.

A small sketch of ditto.

A sketch of King Lear and his Daughter.

The second picture of Angelica and Madora.

Do. of a Damsel and Orlando.

Mr. West's portrait, half-length.

Sketch of his two Sons, when Children.

Do. when Boys.

- Sketch of his two Sons when young Men.
- Portrait of the Rev. — Preston.
- Picture of the Bacchanté Boys.
- Do. of the Good Samaritan.
- Picture of the Destruction of the Old Beast and False Prophet :—Revelation.
- Do. of Christ healing the Sick, Lame, and Blind, in the Temple.
- Do. of Tintern Abbey.
- Do. of Death on the Pale Horse ; or, the Opening of the Seals.
- Do. of Jason and the Dragon, in imitation of Salvator Rosa.
- Do. of Venus and Adonis looking at Cupids bathing.
- Do. of Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh.
- Do. of the Uxbridge Passage-boat on the Canal.
- Do. of St. Paul and Barnabas rejecting the Jews, and turning to the Gentiles.
- Do. of the Falling of Trees in the Great Park at Windsor.
- Do. of Diomede and his Chariot-horses struck by the Lightning of Jupiter.
- Do. of the Milk-woman in St. James's Park.
- Do. of King Lear in the Storm at the Hovel.
- Do. of the Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise.
- Do. of the Order of the Garter.
- Do. of Orion on the Dolphin's back.
- Do. of Cupid complaining to Venus of a Bee having stung his finger.
- Do. of the Deluge.
- Do. of Queen Elizabeth's Procession to St. Paul's.

Picture of Christ shewing a Little Child as the Emblem of Heaven.

Do. of Harvest-home.

Do. of a View from the east end of Windsor Castle looking over Datchet.

Do. of Washing of Sheep.

Do. of St. Paul shaking the Viper from his Finger.

Do. of the Sun setting behind a group of Trees on the banks of the Thames at Twickenham.

Do. of the driving of Sheep and Cows to water.

Do. of Cattle drinking at a Watering-place in the Great Park, Windsor, with Mr. West drawing.

Do. of Pharaoh and his Host drowned in the Red Sea.

Do. of Calypso and Telemachus on the Seashore; second picture.

Do. of Gentlemen fishing in the Water at Dagenham Breach.

Do. of Moses consecrating Aaron and his Sons to the priesthood.

Picture of the View of Windsor-Castle from Snow-Hill, in the Great Park.

Do. of a Mother inviting her little Boy to come to her through a small Stream of Water.

Do. of the naming of Samuel, and the prophesying of Zacharias.

Do. of the Ascension of our Saviour.

Do. of the Birth of Jacob and Esau.

Do. of the Brewer's Porter and Hod Carrier.

Do. of Venus attended by the Graces.

Do. of Samuel, when a Boy, presented to Eli.

Do. of Christ's Last Supper. (In brown colour.)



Picture of the Reaping of Harvest, with Windsor, in the back-ground.

Do. of Adonis and his Dog going to the Chase.

Do. of Christ among the Doctors in the Temple.

Do. of Moses shewn the Promised Land.

Do. of Joshua crossing the River Jordan with the Ark.

Do. of Christ's Nativity.

Do. of Mothers with their Children, in water.

Do. of Cranford Bridge.

Do. of the sketch of Pyrrhus, when a Child, before King Glaucus.

Do. of the Traveller laying his Piece of Bread on the Bridle of the dead Ass. From Sterne.

Do. of the Captivity. From ditto.

Do. of Cupid letting loose Two Pigeons.

Do. of Cupid asleep.

Do. of Children eating Cherries.

Sketch of a Mother and her Child on her Lap.

The small picture of the Eagle bringing the Cup to Psyche.

The picture of St. Anthony of Padua and the Child.

Do. of Jacob, and Laban with his Two Daughters.

Do. of the Women looking into the Sepulchre, and beholding Two Angels where the Lord lay.

Do. of the Angel loosening the Chains of St. Peter in Prison.

Do. of the Death of Sir Philip Sydney.

Do. of the Death of Epaminondas.

Do. of the Death of Bayard.

The small sketch of Christ's Ascension.

The sketch of a Group of Legendary Saints. In imitation of Rubens.

The picture of Kosciusco on a Couch, as he appeared in London, 1797.

Do. of the Death of Cephalus.

Do. of Abraham and Isaac:—"Here is the Wood and Fire, but where is the Lamb for Sacrifice?"

The sketch of the Bard. From Gray.

Do. of the Pardoning of John by his Brother King Henry, at the solicitation of his Mother.

Do. of St. George and the Dragon.

The picture of Eponina with her Children, giving Bread to her Husband when in Concealment.

The sketch on paper of Christ's Last Supper.

The picture of the Pardoning of John, at his Mother's Solicitation.

Do. of the Death of Lord Chatham.

Do. of the Presentation of the Crown to William the Conqueror.

Do. of Europa crowning the Bull with Flowers.

Do. of Mr. West's Garden, Gallery, and Painting-Room.

Do. of the Cave of Despair. From Spenser.

The picture of Christ's Resurrection.

The sketch of the Destruction of the Spanish Armada.

The picture of Arethusa bathing.

The sketch of Priam soliciting of Achilles the Body of Hector.

The picture of Moonlight. (Small.)

The small sketch of Cupid shewing Venus his Finger stung by a Bee.

The drawings of the Two Sides of the intended Chapel at Windsor, with the Arrangement of the Pictures, &c.

The drawing of St. Matthew, with the Angel.

Do. of Alcibiades and Timon of Athens.

The drawing of Penn's Treaty.

Do. of Regulus.

Do. of Mark Antony, shewing the Robe and Will of Cæsar.

Do. of the Birth of Jacob and Esau.

Do. of the Death of Dido.

The large sketch, in oil, (on paper,) of Moses receiving the Laws on Mount Sinai.

The large drawing of the Death of Hippolytus.

The large sketch, in oil, of the Death of St. Stephen. On paper.

The drawing of the Death of Cæsar.

Do. of the Swearing of Hannibal.

Do. of the Expulsion of Adam and Eve.

Do. of the Deluge.

The sketch, in oil, of the Landing of Agrippina. On paper.

Do. of Leonidas ordering Cleombrotus into Banishment. On paper.

The drawing of the Death of Epaminondas.

The sketch, in oil, of the Death of Aaron. On paper.

The drawing of the Death of Sir Philip Sydney.

The sketch, in oil, (on paper,) of David prostrate, whilst the destroying Angel sheathes the Sword.

The drawing of the Women looking into the Sepulchre.

Do. of St. John preaching.

Do. of the Golden Age.

Do. of Antinous and Stratonice.

Do. of the Death of Demosthenes.

The large sketch, in oil, (on paper,) of Death on the Pale Horse.

The drawing of King John and the Barons with Magna Charta.



The drawing of La Hogue.

Do. of Jacob and Laban.

The large ditto of the Destruction of the Assyrian Camp by the destroying Angel.

The large sketch, in oil, (on paper,) of Christ raising the Widow's Son.

Do. in ditto, (on paper,) of the Water gushing from the Rock, when struck by Moses.

The drawing of the Death of Socrates.

Do. of the Boyne.

Do. of the Death of Eustace St. Celaine.

The sketch, in oil, (on paper,) of the Procession of Agrippina with her Children and the Roman Ladies through the Roman Camp, when in Mutiny.

The drawing of the Rescue of Alexander III of Scotland from the Fury of the Stag.

Do. of the Death of Wolfe.

The sketch, in oil, of King Alfred dividing his Loaf with a Pilgrim.

The sketch, in oil, of the Raising of Lazarus.

The small whole-length of Thomas à Becket, in oil, on canvass.

The small picture of the Death of the Stag.

The drawing of ditto.

Do. of Nathan and David.

Do. of Joseph making himself known to his Brethren.

The drawing of Narcissus in the Fountain.

Do. sketch, in small, of the Duannic received by Lord Clive.

Do. of the Continnence of Scipio.

Do. of the Last Judgment, and the Sea giving up its Dead.

Do. of the Bard. From Gray.

The sketch of Belisarius and his Family.

Do. in oil, of Aaron standing between the Dead and Living to stop the Plague.

Do. on paper, of the Messenger announcing to Samuel the Loss of the Battle.

The drawing of Sir Philip Sydney ordering the Water to be given to the wounded Soldier.

The sketch of Christ Rejected.

The great picture of Christ Rejected.

Do. of Death on the Pale Horse.

The second picture of Christ healing the Sick.

The third great picture of Lord Clive receiving the Duannic.

Portrait of the Duke of Portland.

Portrait of Himself, left unfinished.

N. B. Besides these productions, Mr. West had, in his portfolios, drawings and sketches exceeding two hundred in number.

THE END.

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Printed by S. & R. Bentley,  
Dorset-street, Salisbury-square, London.

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